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(Formerly The
Sierra/Dynamix
Newsmagazine)



The Magazine of

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FREE GAMES

See Pages 40 and 41



16-Page Insert Aces of the Pacific

Behind the scenes at
The Dagger of Amon Ra

Hoyle III & Nova 9
Strategy Guides

Environmentalism
comes to the
small screen in
EcoQuest

Making sense of
Multimedia

**New CD
Software**

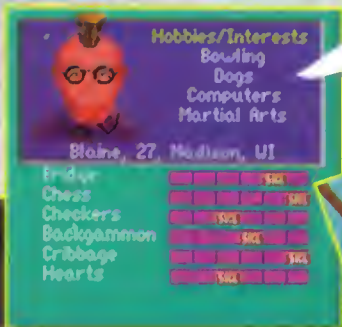
SPECIAL REPORT

Building A
Computer
Game



Actual face-maker screens from TSN

TOTALLY SEMI-TRUE STORY!

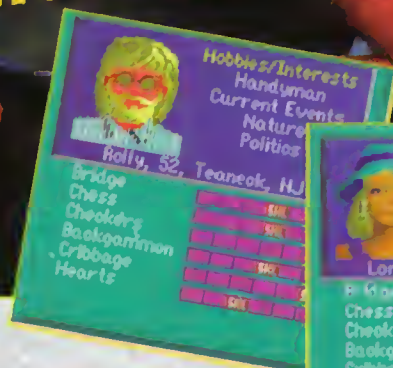


Actual Red Baron screens from TSN



When I shot down the Red Baron somewhere over New Jersey...

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as Your
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I'm tellin' ya, it all started with a bridge game. I was on *The Sierra Network* playin' with my regular buds, Rolly, Loretta, and Michael, when

Rolly started sayin' how cool New Jersey was, and puttin' down Wisconsin.

I knew my only choice was to blow Rolly out of the sky. I challenged him to a game of *Red Baron*. Rolly took off in a Fokker tri-plane, and Michael was right behind him. I was in the air in a flash with Loretta covering my tail. I caught up to Rolly, and we were goin' at it hammer and tongs. Loretta came screamin' in from below, and I was, like, way bummed, because I wanted to blast Rolly myself. But suddenly Rolly pulled a slip-turn, choked his engine, and was all over Loretta like a bad haircut. She was history. It was just me and him. We were in tight, climbin' all the while. That sucker could turn on a dime, but my bi-plane was fast and mean. He almost got me, though. I was chasin' him when he spun around and went for me. Thinkin' fast, I climbed up, like I was runnin' away. He got excited and went for me. I spun hard to the right, and got him in my sights. I punched more holes in him than New Jersey has turnpike exits. I watched him spin out of sight, belchin' smoke and flames. Teach *him* to call me a cheesehead.

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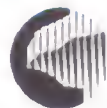
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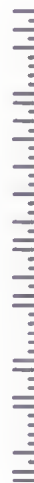
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ON THE COVER:
InterAction artist Terry Robinson gives us his view of how a computer game is built. The actual process is a bit more complex, as shown in articles about the making of *Laura Bow II*, *EcoQuest*, and *Conquests of the Longbow: The Legend of Robin Hood*. A detailed look inside the game creation process starts on page 25. Laura Bow art by Bob Gleason Dennis Lewis.



THE INSIDE VIEW



by Ken Williams

Ken Williams, president of Sierra On-Line, routinely draws complaints from *InterAction* readers for his somber portraits. While we were unable to get Ken to smile for the camera, we did get his permission to print this incredible simulation.

Welcome back to *InterAction* Magazine! Each Spring issue, this magazine gets thousands of new readers (mostly lucky people who got new computers under the Christmas tree.) For these new readers, I'd like to introduce myself, tell you about my background and my software company, and ultimately warn you of the biased nature of the editorial you are about to read.

As for my background, I've been in the computer business for 20+ years now. I started my career in the early 70s, programming databases for mammoth mainframe computers. I loved my job so much they let me design whole computer systems after a while, and I ended up building myself a promising career. I loved my job, but in 1979 I left it behind to start a little company called Sierra On-Line.

When I started the company, I thought Sierra would be a "garage business" selling games to owners of garage-built computers. I was wrong. It grew to be the largest computer game developer in the world.

I've had a ringside seat at the birth of the personal computer business. It's been fast going, and sometimes it really hasn't been any fun (from the business end anyway). This has left me highly opinionated about the industry - where it is, and more importantly where it is going. Often, the views I express in this column are at odds with the way I run this magazine and my company. I tell you what's happening and what's hot, even when I don't recommend it.

Each month, I get mailbags of feedback from *InterAction* readers (and occasionally others in the industry) on what I write here. It's safe to say that some of you strongly disagree

with me and some even get angry. Please remember, this is an opinion column. I try to make it informed and insightful, but I always reserve the right to make it biased. It makes life much more interesting.

Color Macs Only Need Apply

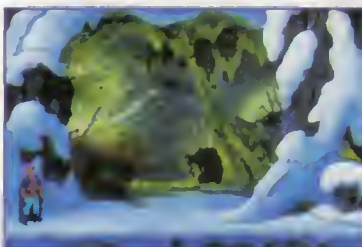
My most controversial columns are always on what computer hardware the industry should support, and one of my controversial statements was that there will be no place for a B&W computer in the 1990s. (Not even laptops).



Sharp detail and vibrant colors are trademarks of the new Mac games like *Space Quest IV*. These games run on color Macs only.



B&W Mac owners should seriously consider upgrading to a color Mac. You'll be able to play exciting games like *Red Baron*.



The new multimedia is going to be the wave of the future. Take a look at the new multimedia version of *King's Quest V*.

This stance on B&W has not made me popular with Mac, Mac Plus, and Macintosh SE owners, but it is proving to be popular with owners of color based Macintosh computers.

What color Mac owners have found out is that Sierra, by not even trying to support the B&W Mac standard, has found a way to make products that work better on their color machines in the area of graphics, animation and soundtrack.

One look at *Space Quest III* (which will work on B&W Macs) versus *Space Quest IV* (which is color only) has been reported as enough to make some B&W Mac owners upgrade to a new color Macintosh model. Really!

Our change away from black and white has made color Mac owners and Mac dealers very happy, (because they sell more machines) but it's not nearly as popular with B&W owners or their checkbooks. I'm not sure what to say about this, I don't feel like I should apologize.

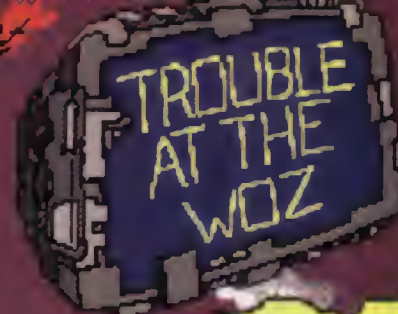
Note to B&W Mac Owners: When you find that this comparison does convince you to spring for a color Mac, pick up the new *Red Baron* on the way home. It will relieve any doubts you might have had about the purchase.

MS-DOS Is Not Standard

I always get lots of hate mail for recommending new hardware or software that MS-DOS owners "just won't be able to live without." For a while I got complaints that I was "forcing" people to buy music cards and high-density disk drives. Then it was VGA. I've been on a soapbox about CD-ROM drives and modems and in a recent issue, I even told PC owners without a 386 processor that they would soon need to buy a whole new computer system just to stay compatible.

continued to page 8

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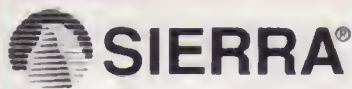
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Now let me add three more items to the list. The new items are *Windows 3.0*, *DOS 5.0* and a book called WORKING WITH DOS 5.0 to help it all make sense.

MS-DOS owners need a new operating system...

DOS 5.0, of course, is the newest version of the official operating system of all PC-based computers.

If you missed picking yours up during the pre-Christmas price wars at your local store, kick yourself now. (The price got as low as \$19.95 - a full \$15 below the WHOLESALE price most dealers receive.) *DOS 5.0* is worth having at 10 times that price.

At the current price of around \$75, *DOS 5.0* is still a steal. You'll need it for all the memory-hogging software coming out in 1992. *DOS 5.0* frees up your computer's memory, and helps allocate it properly.

I haven't found any incompatibility with any of the memory-hog programs I've already got, either. A lot of people run it with QEMM or a similar program, but I haven't even seen a reason to need one. It's a very good operating system.

...which you will still need to read a manual to understand...

Obviously, Working with DOS 5.0 is the book that will help you understand the last paragraph. It will also explain a lot more computer information you have no interest in, but every computer owner has to know. It's a steal at \$14.95. (Microsoft Press). 1-800-MSPRESS

...so buy Microsoft Windows 3.0, too.

Windows 3.0 is the third item on my shopping list. *Microsoft Windows 3.0* is a "business standard" that will soon show up in homes everywhere, or so I believe. There are people that would argue with me, of course.

Windows has its faults even in the business world. I guess this is another of those issues I'll get letters about, because I think it's great and probably the future of MS-DOS based

computing. I do know people that HATE *Windows*, but they are the same people that hate Macintoshes ("An idiot-proof machine only an idiot would use", Or so goes the argument). But I have always thought of the Macintosh interface as the future of computing, and *Windows 3.0* IS the spirit of the Macintosh interface (only for MS-DOS based computers).

Windows is already a true standard in the office. At Sierra we use *Microsoft Word*, *Excel*, *Publish*, and *Project* for all of our administrative/clerical work, *Powerpoint* for presentations and *CC:Mail* for interoffice communications. All are *Windows* applications and they are a pleasure to use.

Home computer people haven't been able to find these handy applications (or this easy-to-use interface) because *Windows* hasn't been found on home machines in the past, and game, ed and home productivity software makers haven't supported it. (Even *Microsoft Flight Simulator* isn't a *Windows* product yet).

This will change over 1992. *Windows* is now being packed with many of the clones, and industry leaders in home productivity like *Intuit* (Quicken) have written *Windows* versions of their software. Sierra just released *Laffer Utilities for Windows* (*Laffer* is another product that all home users should have) and *Dynamix* plans to release a pinball game exclusively for *Windows* sometime in April. I bet other game publishers (and probably education publishers like *Broderbund*) will make the jump to *Windows* soon.

While I do endorse *Windows*, I will warn you that *Windows* is coming, but isn't quite "there" yet as far as homes are concerned. If you are the first on your block to install *Windows 3.0*, expect to find that 95% of your current home software isn't compatible. You'll need to know about something called a PIF file to get yourself really going.

(Editor's note: Ken has included information on *Windows* memory problems and PIF files on page 10).

AN ONGOING ISSUE: ICON INTERFACES

The next "controversy" I want to address is one that new readers and newer Sierra customers might not even understand. The subject is the much discussed change to the Sierra Adventure Game interface. Specifically, it's the absence of a text-based input system (known as a parser) in favor of the new icon (picture) based control system for the games.

Recently, I cornered Al Lowe (of *Leisure Suit Larry* fame) and Roberta Williams (of *King's Quest* fame) on TSN to ask them how they felt about the new system, now that they have an icon-based game under their belts. Here is the transcript of the conversation, warts and all.

KenW: hi roberta and Al, I'd like to ask you how you feel about the new icon interface now that you've each designed a game? Was it the right move?

RobertaW: You go first, Al.

Al Lowe: I didn't like the icon interface at first. Spent too many years learning to type fast; too many things I wanted to say to the game and couldn't. However, I soon learned to NOT think verbally (in the form of commands) but more about the puzzle at hand (oops, excuse pun) Soon I found I liked PNC [Editors note: PNC refers to the new "point and click interface] more; it was "closer to the metal", less verbiage = more puzzles. The problem with *Larry5* was in my intent: when Ken and I discussed making the various Sierra games have different ability levels, *Larry* came out easiest, *Space Quest* next, and so on. I tried hard to put many alternate solutions, obvious clues, and less obvious alternate (higher-scoring) puzzles in *Larry5*. What we've found is, nearly everyone plays it, finds the first solution, and never returns to attempt the more difficult, higher-point solutions. If I had it to do over again, the extra clues, and obvious solutions would be eliminated.

KenW: al, are you sure people aren't replaying? the market research on colonels bequest showed over 80% replayed the game numerous times.

continued on page 10

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Al Lowe: The people that have "complained" about the game being too easy, have all said "I got thru it quickly."

Al Lowe: What does the market research say? (Ed Note: Sierra does follow-up research with players of each new Sierra game shortly after shipment.)

KenW: We haven't got the final report yet.

Al Lowe: I did hear that early data said that a large percentage of the players were women! That's a surprise.

RobertaW: Obviously, since I designed the icon interface I would be in favor of it...but not because I prefer non-typing interfaces, but because I think the market is changing to where most people don't want to take the time to learn either how to type, spell, or figure out just how you talk to a computer via an adventure game! I designed the icon interface with the future in mind...especially as it relates to fancy CD-Rom based entertainment machines which are going to be coming in the next few years. I wanted Sierra to be ready for that eventuality.

On a design note I prefer working with the no-typing interface because I think it frees me as a designer to not have to worry about people are going to type in that could mess up the plot of my game. I feel more control over the design when the player can't muck up the story by typing in a lot of nonsensical stuff that I would normally try to respond to in some way. I do think, though, that as designers, with the no-typing interface, we have to be much more careful with the design, and the plots, and the characters, and the puzzles than we had to before basically, we just have to be better designers!

Al Lowe: That's an excellent point, Roberta. I spent lots more time writing fun messages since I didn't have to write all those error-type messages.

KenW: Al and Roberta, so have we got the right interface now? what will you do different for this years products?

RobertaW: Al... u start

Al Lowe: I think the big 4 (eye hand talk inventory) will always be around. I think the others will float depending on the particular game. I do like

the current score being constantly displayed in the icon bar, and expect to adopt that. I think other icons could open up (ie, nested menus) so that talk could offer a few more choices. I'm still undecided about "talk trees" — just can't figure out how to keep them from becoming stale. I also think it's time we went to full screen, instead of leaving the blank line at the top (just in case we ever want to put up that text menu bar again). Does seem silly, eh? I would hope we'd make better use of the "other" mouse buttons. Give them a common purpose that all the games could support.

RobertaW: Al, what's a "talk tree?"

Al Lowe: Like Dynamix's branching conversations or Monkey Island.(Or Winnie the Pooh!) <G>...Talk to Tigger.. ...Look at Tigger's butt... Invite Tigger to your room.

RobertaW: Okay. Got it.

RobertaW: As far as, "do we have the no-typing interface right, I think it's essentially there. I think it's about as easy as it can get (for people to get the hang of it quickly)

RobertaW: and yet as varied as it can be for people to be able to play a challenging adventure game. If there are any changes to be made, it would probably be in adding a "floating" icon or two to the generic "look," "action," "talk," "use it," and "inventory" icons. Perhaps, we might "nest" an icon or two under the main icons, but we shouldn't get carried away with that or we could risk making the interface too complex again.

RobertaW: As far as improvements for this year's games...

RobertaW: I think the improvements should be in the design, NOT in the interface as such. For instance, in KQ6, we're adding a lot more optional puzzles (which you may or may not do, and still get to the end of the game). We're adding multiple solutions to puzzles. We're putting in multiple uses to same objects. We're putting in a few "red herrings" and lots of timers so that things would need to be done within a certain amount of time. We're also experimenting with some light arcade stuff...but very light! Basically, I think any "easy-

ness" problems we have with the no-typing interface is in the design, not the interface.

Al had to go at this point so the conversation came to an end. My own opinion, by the way, is that our newest games, *EcoQuest*, *Police Quest III* and *Conquest of the Longbow*, show how far the new icon interface has come. The designers just needed time to play with it to make it work at its best.

Al, Roberta and I are all regular TSN users by the way, so if you find us on the TSN system or in one of the conference rooms, you can give us your two cents worth.

A ROUND-UP OF MY PET PROJECTS

Having addressed several different issues, I'll end this article without controversy and do a simple unashamed sales pitch for a few of my pet projects. First off, get *Laffer Utilities* (especially for *Windows*). My family uses it all of the time and the silly little additions that it makes to computing (such as the "daily quote" when you start up the machine in the morning) add just a little bit more fun to owning a PC.

Next up, if you aren't already on TSN and you live in the continental U.S., you've just gotta do it. (Buy a modem if you have to). Multiplayer gaming is where it's at, and you're going to love new multiplayer *Red Baron* and on-line miniature golf (both of which should be available to all users of the Sierra Network by the time you read this).

Finally, I want to be the first to officially plug *King's Quest VI*, which I confidently predict will be the hottest single product of Christmas 1992. *King's Quest* is still one of the only game series out there designed with the whole family in mind.

Why do I have such lofty hopes for KQVI? Well, *King's Quest V* just spent its second Christmas as one of the top ten selling products in computer games. It's sold over 300,000 units so far (something of a phenomenon in the computer industry) and the *King's Quest* series has sold well over 1,500,000 units by now. Computer games just don't sell in numbers like this. If you look at history, comparing

sales of *King's Quest I* to *King's Quest II*, II to III, etc. the numbers say that *King's Quest VI* will sell 300,000 plus units in its first 90 days of availability...which is more than we can probably even make in that amount of time.

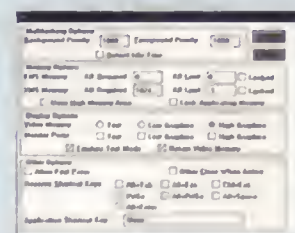
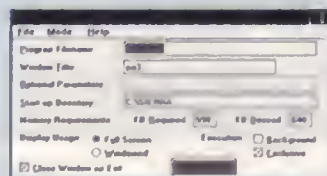
My last suggestion for this issue: Go to your retailer and put your copy of *King's Quest VI* on advance order today. It may be the only way you'll even get one before 1993.

See you next issue and keep those cards and letters coming.

Ken Williams

DOS APPLICATIONS

Here's what's in the standard PIF file that I use:



The only problem I typically have is with conflicting use of expanded or extended memory. Our games have an option to take advantage of extra memory found to speed play. In general I turn this option off. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. Hopefully, soon I can get a better answer to this.

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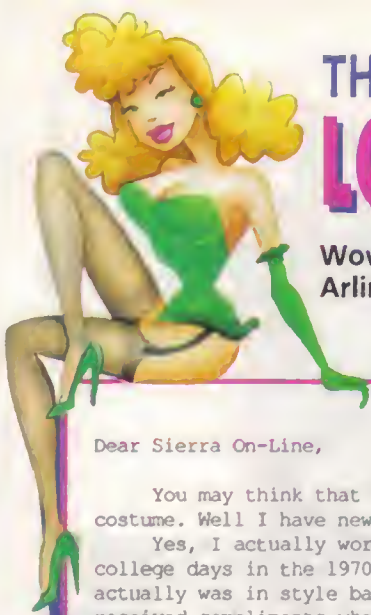
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THE GRAND CHAMPION LOUNGE LIZARD CONTEST WINNER

Wow! Did Larry pop out of somebody's computer screen? NO! It's Richard Kelsey of Arlington, Texas. Mr. Kelsey sent us these delightful photos and the following letter:

Dear Sierra On-Line,

You may think that the outfit I am wearing is a costume. Well I have news for you: it isn't.

Yes, I actually wore that outfit during my college days in the 1970's. Yes, that outfit actually was in style back then. And yes, I actually received compliments when I wore that leisure suit!

What inspired me to such grand and glorious dreams of 100% polyester? Believe it or not it was "The Six Million Dollar Man" television series. At that time "The Six Million Dollar Man" was a big ratings hit. In almost every episode Steve Austin, the hero, wore leisure suits. Not only that, Steve Austin always got the girl. Soon, I realized what enabled Steve to get women: leisure suits.

So I bought this one. I got many compliments, but no women. I wonder why!

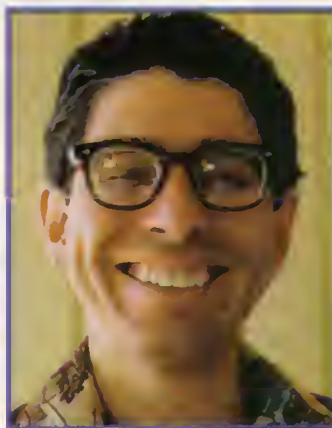
Now the leisure suit hangs in my closet. But for such a worthwhile contest, I wore it and was greeted with loud and long laughter from my wife. This was the first time in sixteen years that I wore this suit, and it took my wife about ten minutes to stop laughing and hold the camera still enough to take the pictures.

Best,

Richard S. Kelsey



Richard Kelsey, Lounge Lizard Extrordinaire!



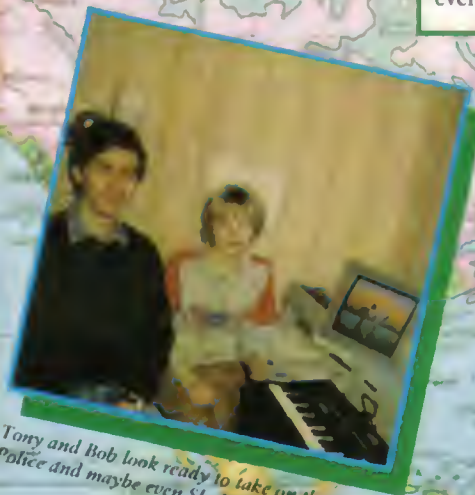
Check out the
other Lounge
Lizard Contest
winners on
page 72!

• FRIENDS FROM FAR AWAY •

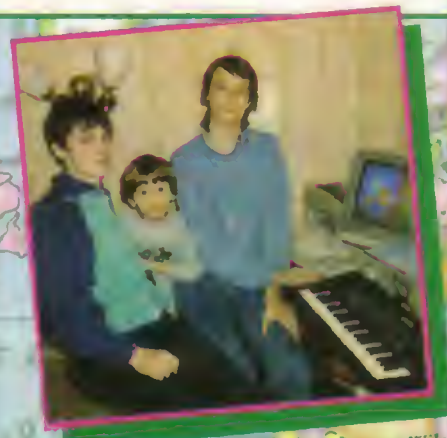
The members of this Sierra fan club sent in their photos to *InterAction*. They could be the kids who live down the block from you...but they're actually from Russia! Fun seems to be a language that everybody speaks.



Gameslers George, Tony, Vova, Bob (aka Boris) and Alexei send greetings from Russia.



Tony and Bob look ready to take on the Sequel Police and maybe even Sludge Vobaul!



Vova, Nick, and Dima rip time with Roger Wilco.

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CORRESPONDENCE

I was wondering if you were going to produce games for the Super Nintendo CD-ROM.

Shawn Francis
Tucson, AZ

I read in an issue of *InterAction* that you are going to make games for video game systems that have a CD-ROM player. Does this include the Turbo Graphics 16 from NEC? I hope so, because I own a TG-16 and I think it would be neat to play new Sierra games on it.

Chris Hesse
Cincinnati, OH

I like your games and I think that you are one of the best computer games companies out there. Awhile back, you said that you might start making games for the Sega Genesis CD-ROM. If you are, could you please send me some information on it?

Brian Robinson
Longwood, FL

Nothing official is on the product schedule, but our resident rumor-monger, Johnnie Magpie, claims Sierra is ready to publish seven CD-ROM titles on Sega Genesis and Super Nintendo in 1992. No confirmation on the actual titles yet, but *King's Quest V* does seem to top the list. Sierra doesn't have any plans to support the NEC TG-16 at this time, but who knows. Watch these pages for more information.

Sierra is serious about supporting what they consider viable platforms in the multimedia industry. For the big picture, read "Making Sense of Multimedia" in this issue.

I recently played *Codename: Iceman* and I found it particularly exciting. Your company is great and I shall recommend your games to all my friends.

However, I am slightly disappointed because I own an IBM 86and have a CGA 4-color graphic screen and I found that some of your games are made only for 286's with VGA or Super VGA graphics. I have seen the 'Install' program on some of your new games and have noted

they are not compatible with my equipment. For example, I would like to purchase *Space Quest IV* and *Police Quest 3*, but I understand they are only for 286 and VGA graphics. I would like you to make games that are compatible with my system.

Michael Gilfix
Montreal, Quebec

Unfortunately, Michael, the world of computer games has moved on, and all new Sierra titles require 286 or better performance and VGA. (The 5.25" disk format even looks like it's gone - see this issue's Rumor Mill). Today's game player is demanding more sophisticated graphics and performance and Sierra, like other game publishers, is now designing titles that simply cannot be converted to older systems.

On the brighter side, however, Sierra does have an extensive catalog of games that will run on your machine. Check out "Games for Older Computers" and "Classic Action" in this issue.

I read something disturbing in the Rumor Mill section of *InterAction*. The rumor is that Sierra will stop producing games for 16-color or EGA monitors. Many people don't have the money for new monitors. I know I don't!

I personally feel that only making games for 256-color monitors is a form of discrimination. You are discriminating against middle-class people who can't afford to upgrade to VGA. Please try to find some compromise.

David Smith
Lakeview Terrace, CA

Well David, we wish we had better news for you. The problem is that EGA is declining fast, and most of our major retailers have told us that they won't stock EGA product in 1992. If we really thought that retailers would support EGA in 1992, we would build it.

You might want to read "The Easy Way to VGA" elsewhere in

this issue. Upgrading may not be as formidable as you think, and you'll thank yourself the first time you boot up a VGA game and see that great art.

I have been very satisfied with all your products and have seen that some of your newest games have large boxes and have unneeded space and most game players do not want to recycle their boxes. I would appreciate it if you start producing smaller boxes and become more aware of the environment.

Ken Hoffman

Good point, Ken, and one Sierra is taking seriously. (See "The Greening of Sierra" in this issue). The larger boxes were originally developed because Sierra's newer games simply wouldn't fit in the older boxes. Rather than scale down the contents, they decided to create a box that would hold present and anticipated content requirements. Some games were 'in-between' and this left room in the box.

Sierra released many of its new titles in the smaller boxes and went to a water-based coating that is more easily recyclable. However, the point of recycling paper is not to save trees (which are largely harvested and replanted for paper production), but to minimize the amount of paper going into landfills. Toward that end, Sierra started producing all documentation and some packaging on recycled stock. They're even investigating giving customers a special price if they buy games on recycled disks.

Thanks for reminding us how important it is that everyone makes an effort to help save the environment.

I live in Australia and have been a BIG, BIG, BIG Sierra fan (I have 20 games) for many years now. I like your *King's Quest* series, as it is full of mystical fantasy, intriguing adventure, unique storylines and twists, all of which contribute to each installment's instant success.

I have an Amiga 500 and, as

you probably know, the Amiga has a very large selection of games. Every time I walk into a computer store, the first and only thing I look for is Sierra games.

Sierra products take quite awhile to appear on an Amiga screen and it is because of that reason that - no offense - I cannot fully applaud your terrific effort with *King's Quest V*. I have seen it on my friend's computer screen and I think it is the greatest thing I have ever seen.

Keep up the good... no, TERRIFIC work.

Mark Roberts
Victoria, Australia.

By the time you read this, *King's Quest V* will be on the shelf for your Amiga. The people at Sierra have been taking their time with the Amiga because they wanted to create the best possible gaming experience for the machine.

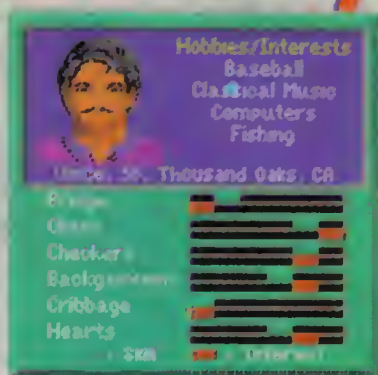
Check out the article on new Amiga games in this issue. The whole new crop of Sierra Amiga adventures should keep you a BIG, BIG fan for a LONG, LONG time.

I have just completed *Space Quest III* on my Macintosh IIfx. I must say this was by far the best graphic adventure I have ever played. The story was interesting and full of suspense. The sound effects and music were unbelievable. The graphics and animation were excellent. I was challenged, yet never frustrated by the puzzles inherent in the game. Your 900 hint line served me well the two times I had to call. I fear now that, having played this game, I will not be happy with any game of any less quality. Do you have any more games which have the same quality graphics, animation, and sound? How about a Mac SQIV?

Paul Tseng

Hoo boy, Paul! If you liked the Mac version of *Space Quest III*, you're gonna LOVE what's next. Sierra has made a quantum leap into games that really take advantage of the Mac's potential. Check out pages 48 & 49!

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(Actual TSN Screens shown)

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ECOQUEST

EVOLUTION OF AN IDEA

By Lorelei Shannon

A DIFFERENT KIND OF ADVENTURE

EcoQuest is not a typical adventure game. It's not about dragons, or spaceships, or legendary heroes. It's about a young boy's quest to save the lives of innocent undersea creatures, and the important things he learns along the way. It's a lot of fun, but it also has something important to say about every person's role in the effort to save our planet. It's a different kind of concept.

When Sierra's design team sat down together, they knew they wanted to plan an exceptional educational game. Many ideas were brought up, discussed, and discarded. The idea of an underwater adventure was an appealing one, but picking the correct approach was difficult. One member's shocking memory brought the group into focus.

REAL LIFE PROBLEMS

EcoQuest co-designer and former teacher Gano Haine recalled: "I worked a lot in children's summer camps. There was a beach where we took the children every Wednesday, a beautiful beach, with rocks and glittering sand. I remember once we sat on the rocks and watched a whole school of porpoises jumping in the waves. Anyway, the next season when we went there, the whole beach was covered with litter. As I walked down to the water with the kids, I looked down and there was human sewage running across the sand and into the ocean. To see that beautiful place trashed was tremendously painful to me."

This disturbing image inspired the team. They became determined to teach children the value of preserving the Earth's most precious resource, the oceans. They knew that the best way to teach children, of course, is through fun. The concept of *EcoQuest*, a thrilling, fun, and educational game, was born.

A SPECIAL KIND OF YOUNG HERO

The game needed a strong lead character, and the only logical choice was a child. Adam, the 12-year-old hero of *EcoQuest*, evolved as the result of many hours of brainstorming.

To give the player a base of knowledge about the ocean, the team made Adam's father an ecologist. Adam's father moves from place to place, following ecological emergencies, making Adam's life exciting but isolated.

The team found that the image of the intelligent but lonely little boy is appealing to children and adults both. The hope is that Adam will be a "breakthrough" character that children can really relate to, like Princess Rosella was in *King's Quest IV*.



QUEST

ADVENTURE, FUN, AND UNDERSTANDING

The actual game design had to be both educational and fun, interesting to people of all ages. The designers wanted *EcoQuest* to be a true adventure game. Said *EcoQuest* co-designer Jane Jensen:

"Gano and I are both Sierra game players, so when we started to design our first Sierra game, we designed a game that we would want to play. The puzzles in *EcoQuest* are traditional Sierra adventure game puzzles, with an ecological and educational slant. You can't die in the game, but other than that, it's a real Sierra adventure. Because it is aimed at an older audience, the game play isn't simplified like *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* or *Fairy Tales*. The puzzles are challenging, and lots of fun".

Many people are put off by the term, "educational", but *EcoQuest* ended up being a truly skillful blend of learning and adventure.

"If you play the game," said Haine, "and you solve the puzzles, you'll find that you've acquired quite a lot of knowledge about environmental techniques and issues. It's the kind of experience where you'll feel as if you're Adam, really living the adventures. You won't feel like you're hearing a lecture or taking a class."

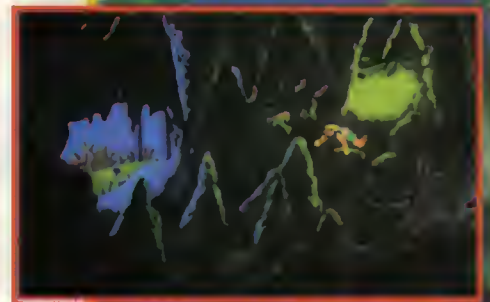
A VERY TRUE-TO-LIFE FANTASY

A very important part of the game is the aspect of simply exposing the player to the beauty and balance of the undersea world. The *EcoQuest* team hopes to instill the player with empathy for the environment and the creatures who live there.

"We wanted to have fish and sea mammals that you could actually talk to," said Jensen. "This core idea evolved into a whole city of talking aquatic characters. The characters' voices and personalities are used to humanize their plight, giving a voice to the faceless victims of our carelessness. Besides, it was the perfect chance to write funny dialog and outrageous fish puns! Hopefully, learning to like these characters will bring home the ecological message to the player. To explain the character's ability to talk, we added a fantasy element, the magical kingdom of Eluria. The power of the sunken Temple of Poseidon allowed the local fish to evolve speech. To explain why they're having problems now, when they haven't in the past, we came up with the missing Whale King. This mystery became the central element of the plot."

"King Cetus used to solve all of the undersea characters' problems for them," said Haine. "Now, for the first time, they have to think for themselves. I think that's a feeling that a lot of people have. We think, or we wish, that someone else will solve our problems for us. We're just now realizing that just isn't going to happen, and we're thinking, 'what can I do to help?'. *EcoQuest* is a story of empowerment. It gives you the power to explore the issues the game raises, and to come up with solutions for them. However, we were very careful not to imply any final solutions to the whole problem of pollution. You are empowered to take care of one situation at a time, to do your part. We're trying to show what an individual can do."

EcoQuest ended up with a very definite story. It's not just a series of unrelated environmental rescues. The citizens of the underwater city Eluria knew of an ancient prophecy which predicted the devastation of the environment by Man, and also predicted that the city would be saved by a human child. The unfolding of the various elements of the prophecy make for a very cohesive and exciting plot. The characters are engaging, and the setting is very convincing and believable.



CAREFUL RESEARCH AND CRAZY QUESTIONS

Clearly, a game which strives for believability has to be carefully researched. Even though the sea life characters in *EcoQuest* talk, their physical characteristics are carefully portrayed. For example, Delphineus, the dolphin character, does not follow Adam around all the time, because he has to go to the surface to breathe. Several dolphin experts were consulted during the creation of Delphineus.

The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito, CA, became one of the designers' principal sources of information. Haine and Jensen kept the Center staff entertained by calling them frequently and asking such questions as "What would it really be like in a whale's mouth?" and "Do sea anemones throw up?" (The answer is yes).


As the research got more and more in-depth, even the designers became more sensitive to the issues being raised. New aspects were added to the game as the designers learned them. As soon as they learned that coral reefs can be destroyed by divers simply touching them, it was added into the script. Recently discovered facts about dolphins' sonar were included. Real sampled whale sounds are a part of the game's soundtrack.

A WATERY WORLD YOU'VE NEVER SEEN

The artwork of *EcoQuest* is a fascinating mixture of realistic, beautiful backgrounds and cartoon characters. Although a certain amount of artistic license was taken with the backgrounds, they create an incredibly convincing underwater environment. You might see fish or seaweed from several different oceanic regions on the same screen, but they will be individually portrayed quite accurately. If the player "clicks" on the fish or plants, detailed information is given. The *EcoQuest* team decided that they would rather expose kids to the greatest variety of sea life that they could, rather than strictly adhere to one particular region of the sea. This decision makes the game much more colorful and lively than it would have been otherwise.

PHILOSOPHICAL FLATFISH AND HYSTERICAL HERMIT CRABS

The characters are not only fun to look at, they're fun to talk to. Their humorous Greek (or pseudo Greek) names (Narcissus, Superfluous, etc.) suggest things about their lively personalities that often turn out to be true. Delphineus the dolphin himself has quite a sense of humor, and cracks jokes and delightfully awful fish puns throughout the game. Many of his lines were written by Josh Mandel, Sierra's Product Design Director and former stand-up comedian.

EcoQuest's fascinating story, combined with gorgeous and fun art and an exciting, funny, and sometimes scary script make for a terrific adventure game. With the ecological and educational content, it's even more than that. It's a game that could really make a difference. 



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BYTE

USER'S COLUMN

Sound Blaster

One of the boards we installed in the Arche 486 was Sound Blaster. With its associated software, it has quietly (no pun intended, but what the heck) become the standard sound system for advanced PCs. The Roland board has much higher sound quality for a higher price, but for anything short of professional music quality, Sound Blaster is good enough.

One user of Sound Blaster

There are lots of other accessories you can get for Sound Blaster, including musical instrument software and a voice editor. Sound Blaster has become the standard sound board, if not for the industry, at least here at Chaos Manor. Recommended.

Jerry Pournelle

PC GAMES

SOUND BLASTER PRO

By Barry Brenesal

The Marines may look for a few good men, but any PC game player will gladly settle for a single good sound card, one that plays both Sound Blaster and AdLib scores, one that doesn't fry your other boards, one that never draws attention to itself, one that delivers all the sophisticated sound effects and music bundled into the latest batch of game software.

Look no further. Sound Blaster Pro does it all, and more. At \$299.95 it's not cheap, but neither are its features.

Testing One, Two

Installing Sound Blaster Pro is a snap. The 16-bit card slips easily into place. It comes with

Trying out Sound Blaster Pro is a treat. It's got great frequency response—that's the difference between listening to a film score on a tiny, muffled AM radio and hearing it on a stereo movie-theater speaker system. The orchestral soundtrack to Origin's Wing Commander is a good example, because it changes mood and melody to match the success of your current battle. Add Sound Blaster Pro to a good VGA screen and a responsive joystick (which you can plug into Sound Blaster Pro's joystick port), and the illusion of dogfighting and flying in a George Lucas-style film becomes 3-D, symphonic reality.

Another plus is the absence of the annoying background music

In short, Creative Labs' Sound Blaster Pro is a big winner. It's quick to install, easy to use, full-featured, and compatible with Sound Blaster and AdLib files. Signal response is excellent. And don't forget

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SOUND BLASTER PRO

In just two years, the Sound Blaster has become one of the most widely-supported PC sound cards. It's easy to see why. The Sound Blaster contains an 11-voice FM synthesizer that makes it fully compatible with the popular Ad Lib Music Card. The day it hit store shelves, the Sound Blaster could be used with hundreds of Ad Lib compatible games and educational programs. To add even more value, the original Sound Blaster included a DAC (Digital to Analog Converter) for digitized voice and sound effects, a microphone jack for voice input, a built-in game port, a built-in 4-watt amplifier, and an optional MIDI interface.

The built-in mixer makes the Sound Blaster Pro fully compliant with Microsoft's Multimedia Level 1 Extensions to Windows. Multimedia software will be able to fade-in, fade-out, and pan the various audio sources to create elaborate sound montages.

The Sound Blaster Pro includes a CD-ROM interface for either an internal or external CD-ROM player.

There's also an internal connector for CD-Audio. The MIDI interface is compatible with the original Sound Blaster's MIDI interface, but adds the MIDI time-stamp that's part of Microsoft's new multimedia standard.

All in all, the Sound Blaster Pro is chock-full of new features, yet it's fully compatible with its younger brother.

DAVID ENGELSH

Scheduled Release: September 1991
For IBM PC and compatibles—\$299.95

CREATIVE LABS
2050 Duane Ave.
Santa Clara, CA 95054
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PC HOME JOURNAL

SOUND BLASTER DOES IT ALL

Review by Harvey Bernstein

The Sound Blaster has so many audio applications packed into one half-sized board that it almost boggles the mind. First, it has an 11-voice stereo music

synthesizer that is fully compatible with the widely used AdLib sound format. Older software that only supports the AdLib board will automatically turn on the AdLib mode—no adjustment by the user is necessary. A separate channel is exclusively for reproducing digitized speech. A microphone jack on the back of the card allows you to digitize your own input voices. With a 4-watt stereo amplifier built in, you can run speakers or headphones directly from the card—no additional amplification is necessary. A standard joystick port also doubles as a MIDI interface, allowing you to connect a synthesizer or any other MIDI instrument. Combine this with an excellent library of software, and it is easy to see why the Sound Blaster has become so popular.

The Sound Blaster Pro is worth the investment! Yes, yes, a thousand times yes!!! When you hear how much the Sound Blaster increases the capabilities of your PC, you'll wonder how you ever got along without one.

PC

Now you can get the number one sound card as part of our new Multimedia Upgrade Kit. Which also comes with a MIDI kit, an internal CD-ROM drive and 5 CD-ROM titles, including Microsoft® Bookshelf® and Windows™ with Multimedia Extensions. In all, \$2,000 worth of goodies for just under \$850.

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THE MARINE MAMMAL CENTER



A Partnership for the Planet

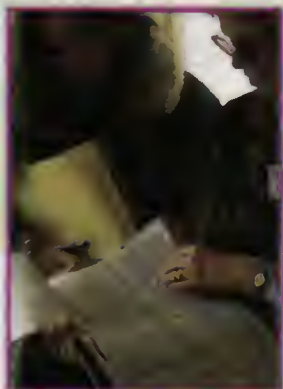
Sierra On-Line meets
The Marine Mammal Center

By Lorelei Shannon

Heroes of the High Seas

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of each *EcoQuest* will go to The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito, California. The Center may be a familiar name to you. They received a lot of media attention during the dramatic rescues of Humphrey, a humpback whale who was stranded in San Francisco Bay in 1985 and again in 1990, and for the sea otter rescue work they performed during the 1989 Valdez oil spill disaster in Alaska. But The Center is much, much more than that.

On January 8, 1992, *EcoQuest* designers Jane Jensen and Gano Haine traveled to The Center, along with a writer and a photographer from *InterAction*. What they discovered there was, simply put, incredible.



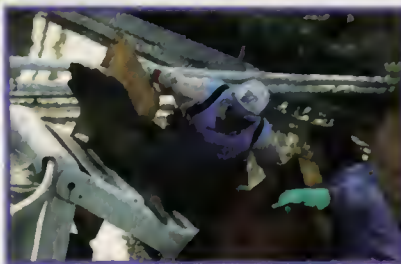
EcoQuest co-designer Gano Haine (right) looks at a sick animal's chart with Center staff member Denize Springer.

Launch Seals, Not Missiles

The Center is located high on a hill overlooking the Pacific Ocean. It is a beautiful, inspirational area. Founded on the site of an abandoned Nike missile base, The Center has rehabilitated and released hundreds of animals. One approaches such a place with a sense of awe. The designers were met by Denize Springer, the communications officer for The Center. This warm, energetic woman had everyone feeling at home in moments. She wasted little time. The team was quickly whisked out the door to meet The Marine Mammal Center's patients.

Injured Innocence

They walked among the chain-link pens and huge pools, observing dozens of injured or sick California sea lions, harbor seals, and elephant seals. Denize spoke quietly about each animal, explaining its illness and treatment. The designers were amazed to



Volunteers guide a young elephant seal back into the pool after it has been examined and given medical treatment.

discover that the people working with the animals were almost all volunteers. It was a moving experience to see the pain of elephant seals with near-fatal skin lesions, sea lions who suffered from gunshot wounds and mysterious seizures, and young seals who had been wounded by motorboats and sharks.

A Critical Distance

The volunteers controlled the animals with wooden herding boards, both to avoid their sharp teeth, and to prevent the animals from growing too fond of the humans. Any seal or sea lion who learns to trust people, they explained, is a target. Keeping a distance from these appealing creatures is no easy task, but it is necessary to their survival.

Stitched-Up Seals and Pacified Pups

After observing The Marine Mammal Center's aquatic clients, the designers were introduced to Dawn Smith, The Center's animal care director. Dawn is a slight, capable woman that you could just as easily imagine wrestling a sea lion to the ground as giving formula to a baby otter. Dawn explained that the veterinarian comes on-site once or twice a week, and that most of the medical care is given by herself and volunteers. They perform even some of the most difficult tasks, such as tube-feeding infant animals, and treating the wounds of massive elephant seals.



Young elephant seals being treated in one of The Center's rehab pools can grow to weigh several thousand pounds.

Victims of Nature, Victims of Man

Many animal illnesses are caused by pollution and debris in the ocean. Animals are brought in with pieces of gill nets wrapped tightly around their necks. Sick animals have been found to have foreign objects in their stomach such as balloons, plastic bags, and even glass bottles. Animals frequently come in with selenium and toluene poisoning, and other illnesses caused by other man-made toxic substances.



Bob, a blind sea lion, will soon be released. This harmless tag will help researchers track his progress in the wild.

In addition to the "smaller" marine mammals, The Center has rescued and treated stranded or injured whales and other huge creatures. Dawn calmly described such astonishing endeavors by veterinarian Laurie Gage as taking blood from the lip of a stranded whale, and giving a 4,000 pound elephant seal a penicillin shot as it lay on the beach. "It has to be done," said Dawn with a shrug.

The Importance of Information

Leslie Grella, The Center's education department director, is proud of her program. She has every right to be. It's quite an accomplishment. The Center offers formal classes in marine mammals and marine conservation, as well as visiting many schools a year and running interactive "Marine Mammal Stations", in which children learn about the animals by participating in fun activities.



A Mucomyst vaporizer provides relief for a sea lion with a lung ailment. He seems to enjoy the treatment!

22,000 people a year take The Center's classes, and another 50,000 tour the facility. One of the most exciting aspects of The Center's education program is their educational summer camp for children. With programs for children ages 7-9, 10-12, and high schoolers, it gets high marks around the country. The teenagers' camp is career oriented, and the students actually get to observe The Center's people out in the field on rescues. Soon the Center will offer the program during the school year for low-income schools.

The Fight Against Ignorance

Other aspects of the education program include sending materials on marine mammals to schools and individuals who request it, and most importantly, educating the public about marine mammals. For example, one of the biggest problems The Center encounters is people who pick up baby harbor seals and take them home. Mostly these people mean no harm, but their ignorance has caused many of the little creatures to die. Teaching people to peacefully co-exist with marine mammals without disturbing or injuring them is one of The Center's primary goals.



Co-designer Jane Jensen (right) takes a first look at the organization which provided so much research for EcoQuest.

Outer Changes, Inner Determination

Peigin Barrett has been The Marine Mammal Center's executive director since 1982, and a volunteer since 1977. She has seen The Center go through astonishing changes. In 1977, The Center had 200 members. Today there are 30,000.



Baby sea lion Tempus is too ill to feed himself, so volunteers feed him formula with a tube.

Center's new programs include a cooperative effort with the Monterey Bay Aquarium to study and treat sea otters, and a volunteer docent program at Pier 39 in San Francisco to educate people about the California sea lions who have made the pier their home. The Pier 39 program has reached an amazing 100,000 people.

Each One is Precious

Peigin, along with every other person at The Center, emphasizes that each animal is worthwhile, and each animal is an individual. Sea otters, for instance, each choose their own tool for cracking the abalones they eat. Usually they choose rocks, but one little fellow in Monterey Bay uses a beer bottle, much to the delight of tourists. He can be seen floating sleepily on his back in the water, with his bottle tucked under his arm.



Life can be dangerous for marine mammals. It is critical that they not learn to approach humans.

Research, Dedication, and Protection

Marine biologist Lance Morgan wants people to know that an important but little-known aspect of The MMC is its research department. They began by cooperating with major marine mammal research laboratories around the country, sending blood and biopsy samples that were obtained humanely and noninvasively. Now they are working on programs of their own.

The Center is currently helping the Marine Mammal Commission investigate a disease epidemic that strikes and kills sea lions. Other programs include research into possible PCB poisoning of elephant seals, and investigating the cause of seizures in sea lions.

They have worked with the EPA in the past on toxicity level studies, providing tissue samples from deceased animals. The Marine Mammal Center is also engaged in ongoing studies to discover the cause of mass strandings. They scientifically track the progress of the animals they have released, often with satisfying results. A radio-tracking study of a group of Center-rehabilitated harbor seals found the animals alive, healthy, and raising families of their own.




A young sea lion readily accepts a treat from a volunteer. Little does he know that the fish conceals his medicine!

An Example of Excellence

One of the most common questions asked of The Center is why they treat common species such as the California sea lion with as much care and concern as they treat endangered species. As Dawn Smith put it, "They all count".

The Center's philosophy is that every species is important to the planet, and can strongly effect the environment and the people who live in it. They have enough time, energy, and love for any and all of

the creatures who need their help.

The Marine Mammal Center is an example of how a few people's willingness to get involved can grow into something truly worthwhile, even something great. 

For more information, write to:
The Marine Mammal Center
Marin Headlands
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Sausalito, CA 94965

If you find an injured marine mammal, DON'T APPROACH IT! If you live in northern or central California, call The Marine Mammal Center at (415) 289-SEAL. If you live anywhere else, call your local police department or humane society for information on the nearest stranding network.



The Greening of Sierra:

How Sierra is Changing to Help the Environment

Sierra On-Line's new game, *EcoQuest*, is about commitment to the environment. It's about making the world a better place for people and animals to live in. It's about caring. With any luck, *EcoQuest* will make a difference to people, and will open a few eyes about environmental issues. It certainly did at Sierra.

Sierra is a company that has always tried to be environmentally friendly. For years, Sierra has used recycled paper for in-house stationary, envelopes, office forms, business cards, toilet tissue and paper towels. The

toner cartridges from all the printers are recycled, for economical as well as ecological reasons. But the creation of *EcoQuest* caused Sierra to realize that there was much more that could be done.

It started small. Added to the list of recycled paper products were fax paper (even thermal fax paper) and the company's paychecks. Next, the decision was made to re-use the large wooden pallets that games packaged for shipping rest on.

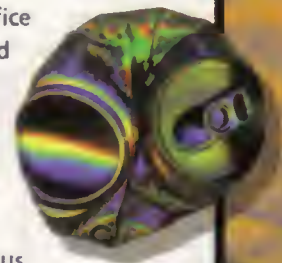
Actual company policies began to change. Some box sleeves and game documents are now being printed on recycled paper. Recycled computer disks are being tried out in *EcoQuest*. In fact, even this magazine is printed on recycled paper. It cost a little extra, but it's worth it.

The company now recycles all paper, including white and colored office paper, and corrugated cardboard. Most employees have always recycled aluminum and glass, and soon the policy will be official.

The Sierra BBS (Bulletin Board Service) saves thousands of pounds of paper and disks a month. Its hintline service is all electronic, and the game demos and patch disks offered are all downloaded directly to the customer's machine. No mail, no packaging, no plastic.

Sierra is looking to the future, investigating such options as aqueous (water-based) box coatings, soybean ink for printing, and fully biodegradable packing materials.

Sierra On-Line is a company in the process of adapting to accommodate the environment. It's not always easy, but it's worth it. Saving the planet isn't a passing fad. It's critical, for our own future, and for the future of our children.



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Adam's Daring Earth Rescue Techniques:

THINGS YOU CAN DO AT HOME TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT

In *EcoQuest*, Sierra's stunning new ecological thriller, the fate of a beautiful undersea city is in the hands of a young boy named Adam. Sound like a high-stress job? Not really, when you consider that the fate of the entire Earth is in your hands. You're the one who can make a difference. But don't panic, because Adam has some pointers for you to make caring for the planet easy.

Recycle. This is probably the most important thing you as an individual can do for the environment. Don't know where to go? Call your city government and ask for the nearest recycling center. Look under Public Works, Sanitation, or Environmental Services. Local environmental organizations, schools, and stores are possibly other sources for information on recycling.

Everybody knows you can recycle aluminum cans, newspapers, glass, and plastic soda bottles. But some recycling centers will accept corrugated cardboard, glossy magazines, polystyrene foam, steel, tin, plastic baggies, white and colored office paper, and other things you never guessed were recyclable. Find out what your local center will handle, and recycle to the max.

The average American produces about 600 times his or her own weight in garbage over a lifetime. That means a 150 pound person will leave behind 90,000 pounds of trash for future generations. Recycling isn't just trendy. It's critical.

- **Precycle.** Try to buy foods and other goods in recyclable or biodegradable containers.
- **Conserve water.** Turn off the faucet when you're brushing your teeth or doing the dishes. Put a low-flow aerator in your faucet.
- **Cut up 6-pack rings.** 90% of them end up in the sea, where they trap and kill fish and sea birds. Cut through each loop before you throw a set of 6-pack rings away.
- **Don't release helium balloons into the air.** It seems like such a harmless thing to do. But balloons often end up in the ocean, where they are swallowed by whales, sea turtles, or other creatures. They usually die.
- **Don't dump toxic chemicals down the sink or in the back yard.** Your old nail polish remover, oven cleaner, paint thinner, or other poisonous substances could end up in your drinking water. Find the number of your local household hazardous waste disposal service in the phone book.
- **Carpool, bike, or walk to school or work.** Automobiles put thousands of pounds of pollution into the air every day.
- **If you live in a house with a yard, make a compost heap.** You can dispose of most of your organic garbage in it, and boy, does it make those flowers grow.
- **Plant a tree.** The average American uses the equivalent of 7 trees a year. That's over 1½ billion trees used annually in the U.S.

Take care of the Earth. It's the only one we have! For more information, check out *The Recycler's Handbook* and *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth*, by The Earth-Works Group.

Go on your own *EcoQuest*. It's fun, it's easy, and it's worth it.

by Lorelei Shannon



Birth of an Adventure

The Creation of a Sierra Game

By Lorelei Shannon

Mommy, Where Do Games Come From?

Sierra On-Line receives many letters from people wondering how a particular game came into existence. Was it a story first? Who designed it? Who did the art, the programming, the writing?

These are all good questions. After all, when you look at a finished Sierra animated adventure, it's hard to imagine it was ever just an idea in the back of someone's head.

But it was.

The Perfect Paragraph

Every Sierra game starts out its life in the same way: As an idea. The designers think of hundreds and hundreds of possible game ideas every month. They must sift through these ideas, and pick out the good ones, the fun ones, the original ones. Often times these decisions are made in "brainstorming" sessions, in which the designers pool their talents to create the best game possible.

When the designers have a really good idea, they write it down. The game ideas first incarnation is the "story treatment", just two or three paragraphs outlining the major events in the game.

Josh Mandel, director of product design at Sierra, elaborates: "The story treatment tells us everything we need to know. Is the raw concept of the game—which can usually be summed up in a few sentences—exciting or uninspiring? Is the genre popular? Are the characters unique and interesting? Does the setting sound like a place that will be fun to explore? Do a hundred puzzles and situations spring

to mind? If a proposal pushes all the right buttons (and it's tough to find one that does), then we all get excited, pat each other on the back, and try to get the proposal approved for expansion into the full design document."

People, Places, and Things

Once the game is approved for production, the designers create the "design document". This is almost like a short story which describes in detail the characters, actions, and plot branches in the game.

The characters are developed even further. The designers work with the production designer to come up with a visual image of the character. Sierra characters are often so fully developed by the game designer that much of the information never gets used in the game. For instance, Roberta Williams could undoubtedly tell you what Princess Rosella's favorite color is, and Lori Cole could tell you about the Bookwyrms' childhood. The very fact that this information exists makes the characters much more alive and real.

Greenwood or Gothic? Underwater or Outer Space?

Once the plot and characters are set, decisions are made as to the ultimate "look" of the game. "The initial concept for the way a game will look can come from any one of several different sources," said Bill Davis, Sierra's creative director. "Many times, as the design develops, I formulate very specific ideas for a game's 'art style'. In situations like this, it becomes

my simple task to convince the director, designer, and production designer that I'm right. At other times it may be the designer who has the initial vision, the director another time, or the production designer another. Ultimately, though, the burden of physically developing the "look" is placed on the shoulders of the production designer for Sierra, Andy Hoyos. When Andy has completed his 'treatment' the baton is passed along to the game's art designer. He or she is assigned the responsibility of actually interpreting this treatment or style throughout the actual game. What a team!"

Frame by Frame, Word by Word

Next, the designers team up with the artists to create storyboards. These combine art and text to illustrate the major screens and actions in the game. The storyboards ultimately function as a sort of map for the artists and animators to work with.

The last stage of design is the final script for the game, much like a Hollywood movie script. Also like Hollywood, Sierra scripts often stay open for revision and interpretation by various members of the team throughout production. Everyone's opinion counts.

Poetry in Motion

The artists and animators can now begin to bring the game to life. "Sierra has successfully been able to blend various animation techniques, such as traditional cel animation, stop motion clay animation, video-capture and state of the art computer animation to bring a new, lifelike dimension to the computer entertainment industry," said Sierra animator Barry Smith. "It is definitely a positive new venue now open to animators who enjoy performing a variety of tasks and exploring uncharted animation techniques."

The most common form of animation used at Sierra is cel. The characters are animated first in pencil, one frame (or cel) at a time. Then the drawings are scanned into the computer, where they're colored, shaded, and rounded out. Using a tool called a video editor, the frames are strung together to create continuous motion.

In video-capture, live actors in motion are captured on videotape, and at the same time, digitized into a computer. The tape is only kept as a backup. A piece of proprietary software created by Sierra called Movie 256 turns the video feed into individual animation cels. The cels are then artistically enhanced within the computer, to conform to the "look" of the game. "Through video capture," said video artist Bob Ballew, "we produce the depth and believability of real life."

Sierra has begun working with clay stop-motion animation only recently. This new application of a classic technique has opened new possibilities for visuals in adventure games.

Interactive Art Gallery

The backgrounds and character portraits, or "talkers" in Sierra games are all hand-painted, and then digitized into the computer. They are literally works of art. Artist Jim Larsen states; "In my career as an artist, I have





always marvelled over the fact that I am allowed to do something I enjoy so much and actually get paid for it. To think that my artwork will be seen and hopefully enjoyed by so many is really an exciting thought for me. It is even more exciting that the artwork created here at Sierra eventually comes to life. There is a great deal of pride in every piece of Sierra artwork, as well as a lot of imagination and hard work."

The character portraits are animated and lip-synched, and the game animation is superimposed on the backgrounds. During the animation process, the computer artists can highlight parts of the scenery, so characters can actually go behind and around them. That's what creates Sierra's 3-D animation effect.

Cohesive Code: Weaving it Together

The programmers start with the game script, pencil drawings of the backgrounds, and rough animation, and begin to tie them together. Using an original computer language known as SCI (Sierra Creative Interpreter), they assemble the pieces of the game. When it's running properly, the finished animation and backgrounds are added. The programmers continue to minutely adjust and tighten the code, until the game is as perfect as possible. In the words of Sierra programmer Brian Hughes; "Programming is the science of turning the story, art, and music into a game."

In Multimedia versions of Sierra games, voices are recorded and digitized, and the programmers must integrate the voices with lip-synched loops of animation.

Music! Music! Music!

Somewhere along the line, the director, music director, and composer must decide on the type of music that will appear in the game. "The general sort of music that will be used in a game is pretty much decided by committee," said long-time Sierra musician Mark Seibert. "We get together with everyone and look at the game as a whole. We try to match the music to the animation and style of the game. Of course, some scenes need exciting music, some scenes need music to evoke suspense, and so on. When we get started, it's magic. It's just a lot of fun."

Sierra's music department is talented and versatile, capable of creating anything from heavy metal to medieval morris dances. The music and sound effects are composed and recorded by musicians, and finally added to the game by the programmers.

Coordination, Diplomacy, and Direction

Someone has to keep all of these elements coordinated. Every game has a producer and a director, just like a movie. The producer makes sure that everything happens in the right order, and happens when it's supposed to. He or she works with the various departments individually, and keeps them working harmoniously together. Or, as Stuart Moulder, Sierra producer, whimsically put it,

"The producer is a bit like the midwife of the game. Our job is to be there and ensure the successful delivery of something very special to our customers."

The director does the same job a Hollywood director does. Working with the art designer, the director decides what the "shots" will look like, how scenes will be timed, and the "mood" of the scenes, as well as coordinating many other important elements. "We panic a lot," said director Bill Skirvin, with a smile. "We're responsible for every part of the game. We have to coordinate the music, art, animation, and programming. It's up to us to make sure the game looks right in every way. It's nerve-wracking, but it's really fun when everything starts coming together and looking good."

Only the Best: Quality Assurance

Once the game is finally finished, it still has a long way to go. Quality assurance takes over. QA people play games all day long, and it's hard work! Sharon Simmons of quality assurance explains: "The Quality Assurance Department is responsible for testing and assuring the quality of each Sierra game. Each game is tested for its playability, design logic, program code errors, and text logic and quality. The game is also analyzed from a user's point of view; novice, hacker, and serious experienced game player. In the course of the QA process an analyst will go through the game approx. 400 to 500 times. Each analyst has their own style of testing a game. The resulting finished product has had all aspects of the game tested in every possible way."

When the game has QA's seal of approval, it goes to the Quality Control department. There, the actual disks are checked for compatibility, easy startup, and other crucial technical points.

When the disks finally go into mass duplication, Sierra's original duplication machines check each disk as it is copied. If the disk is bad, it is automatically ejected.

An In-House Ad Agency

All packaging and marketing is done in-house. From the copy on the box back to the documentation inside, the game is 100% Sierra.

"When we start a cover," said Kurt Busch, Creative Director for the Marketing Division, "We meet with the game's designer and lead artist to get a feel for the look and atmosphere of the game. We match the right artist and prepare dozens of pencil sketches. At the same time, we put together screen shots and copy that will hopefully bring out the way one would feel playing the game." Only when the box sleeve, with its original cover art, is slipped around the game box, is the game truly finished.

Any Sierra game you see is the result of a massive team effort. All of that cooperation and talent really shows in the final product!

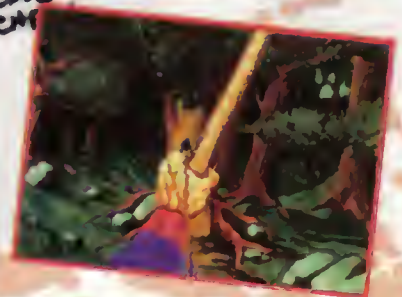


Initial concepts may change a little in the final artwork. Sometimes they change a lot.

Storyboards provide a guideline for the artists and animators to work with.



Ext. Archery in Forest
L. Robin Practicing With Bow And Arrow
IN FOREST ARCHERY



Nine Men's Morris

Strategy Tips

by Bill Larkins

One of the many fascinating historical aspects of Christy Marx's *Conquests of the Longbow: The Legend of Robin Hood* is the ancient game of Nine Men's Morris.

The object of the game is to remove your opponent's playing pieces from the board until he has only two pieces left, or is unable to move. You remove one of your opponent's pieces every time you create a "mill", which consists of three of your pieces laid in a row with no vacant points between them. (No diagonals!)

The complete instructions for playing Nine Men's Morris are on pages 14 and 15 of the Longbow game manual, and a free game board is included in the game package. The basic rules are simple, but Morris has the potential for complex strategy. Here are a few tips to help make you a Morris champion!

First, for a way to refer to moves, number the possible positions on the Morris board (as seen in the illustration).

When you are initially placing your nine pieces, try to gain a position where the next piece placed threatens to create not one, but two possible mills. Placing one of your pieces in each of the diagonal opposite corners can produce this situation.

For example, If you move first, and put your first two pieces in positions 3 and 22, while your opponent put his first piece in one of the inner squares, say 16, then you have the potential for threatening a mill with your next move. By putting your next piece on position 1, you could threaten either of two possible mills with your next move: a mill along 1-2-3, or a mill along 1-10-22. Your opponent can only block one of these potential mills.

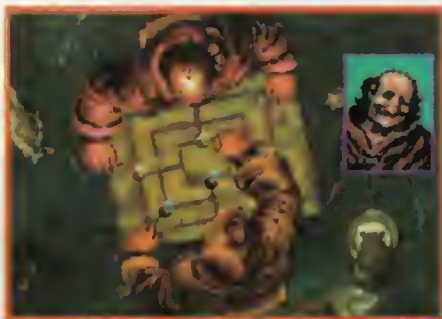
If your opponent places his piece on square 1 (rather than on an inner



square like 16) for his second move, you can put your third piece on square 24 and again threaten a mill two ways, this time 3-15-24 or 22-23-24.

However, your opponent is not in a hopeless position yet. Your opponent can force you to place your piece where you didn't really want to by threatening a mill of his own.

Suppose that your first two moves are squares 22 and 3, and your opponent's first move was square 17. If your



opponent places his next piece on square 18, he threatens a mill on squares 17-18-16, so you have to put your third piece on square 16 instead. Your opponent can then place his third piece on square 12, forcing you to put your fourth piece on

square 7. Your opponent can follow by placing his fourth piece on square 10, blocking your possible mill along the left outside line and forcing you to put your fifth piece on square 11... and so on. This technique of forcing your opponent's move by threatening a mill is an important one to remember.

With careful play on each side, neither player will get any mills with the first 9 moves. It is always necessary to consider placing your pieces for the strongest position in the end game, where pieces are moved from one square to an adjacent square along a line.

There are two strategies to aim for in the end game. One is to set up an "alternating mill". Suppose you have pieces on squares 22 and 24, with 23 empty, and also have a mill on squares 19-20-21. By moving your piece back and forth between squares 20 and 23, you will create a mill with every move, and you can take one of your opponent's pieces each time. By taking the piece your opponent moved last, you can completely prevent your opponent from moving, as you remove his pieces one by one.

In fact, that is the second strategy to work for: limiting your opponent's moves as much as possible. If you cannot totally prevent your opponent from moving, you can limit his moves by blocking his pieces as often as possible. You will gradually weaken your opponent's position and strengthen your own.

One final tip. Don't be too greedy! You can often achieve a strong position by placing a piece so that it could be used to create a mill with the next move. Now wait—don't actually create the mill. Move another piece to work toward a second mill instead. This way, if your opponent moves so as to threaten a mill on his next move, you can then complete your stand-by mill and break up the opponent's threat!



An
INSIDE LOOK
at Sierra's new
mystery thriller!

LAURA BOW

II

THE DAGGER OF AMON RA



by Josh Mandel



The Murderous Matter of Making a Mystery.

Making a murder mystery work on the computer screen is a killer experience.

Trust me. It's been over two years since Sierra On-Line released *The Colonel's Bequest*, easily Roberta Williams's most controversial game design to date. Unlike conventional adventures, events unfolded whether the player witnessed them or not. This made for a more realistic game world, but also a less structured one: the game could be as complicated or as simple as the player wanted it to be. It's entirely possible to play through the game and never learn about the secret walkways behind the walls, the hidden panels, the bodies in the basement, or all the underground treasure.

There was also something slightly scandalous about the main character, Laura Bow, a college student on vacation in the misty bayous of 1920's Louisiana...she was independent, attractive and a bit of a snoop.

In early 1991, Roberta Williams decided to bring Laura Bow back to the small screen. Roberta, Creative Director Bill Davis, and I met to discuss the possibilities. It would be, naturally, another mystery, maintaining the flavor of the 1920's, and should have the same chilling, creepy feeling as the



When an artist's sketches come to life(?) the results can be frightening. When a victim is found stabbed with *The Dagger of Amon Ra*, Laura must hurry to find as many clues to the murder as possible.

first Laura Bow game. New game technology and an increased pool of creative talent, however, gave us the opportunity to really serve up an exciting little thriller.

We wanted the game to expand Laura Bow as a character. She'd again be facing an unknown threat, but perhaps this time she'd become the focus of the threat rather than an impartial observer.

As for the setting, the key feeling we were looking for was claustrophobia, the sense of being trapped in a confined space...yet not so confining that the player wouldn't have ample opportunity for exploration.

Some of the locales we considered were an abandoned movie studio, a cruise ship, and a zeppelin. Finally we chose the echoing halls of a museum at night. A natural history museum, in particular, would contain a gold mine of scenic elements: stuffed and preserved animals, all kinds of skeletons, mummies, shadowy

corridors, seedy dioramas with creepy mannequins, ancient torture devices, and hidden spaces behind the exhibits for museum personnel. Better still, the 1920's were a time when Americans became fascinated with all things Egyptian (as reflected in the Art Deco art and architecture of the period), so it was logical to have an Egyptian exhibit as part of the museum.

In contrast to the quiet isolation of the museum, we settled on noisy, frantic New York City as the game's general locale. There's so much imagery connected with NYC and the twenties: prohibition, speakeasies, gangsters, jazz clubs flappers, and a free-wheeling lifestyle that would be wholly unfamiliar to the naive, young reporter Laura Bow.

Once we'd chosen the location, the basis for the mystery came easily. One of the key elements in making a mystery work is spreading the suspicion around. A museum exhibit containing priceless



Laura Bow, cub reporter and amateur sleuth. This time she may be in over her head. Can she solve this raucous 1920's mystery...without becoming its victim?

artifacts would be the prime target of thieves — perhaps a variety of potential thieves with differing motives: greed, religious outrage, patriotism, rivalry. Naturally, poor Laura (who seems to always attract trouble) would get caught in the middle.

As our discussions continued, Bill Davis knew instinctively which artist would

fit the mood perfectly: J.C. Leyendecker (see sidebar on page 33). Leyendecker's work inspired such famous artists as Norman Rockwell; his illustrations are crisp and highly stylized, with stark and dramatic backgrounds that offset the intricately rendered characters.

At this point in the early development of the project, designer Bruce Balfour took over the in-depth design duties. Bruce's experience was ideally suited for the task: among the fiction he's had published in various books and magazines was a comic book series based on Jack the Ripper. He took hold of the story concept and transformed it into a rich, exotic mystery:

"Museums have an interesting, unique atmosphere, and the variety of exhibits brought all kinds of puzzle possibilities to mind. Then we just needed a reason to lock Laura in a museum with a cast of eccentrics, and throw away the key. Since Egyptology was trendy in the 1920's, we put an



The artists first make rough sketches of the main character in action. These drawings depict the emotional changes Laura Bow will experience on her mystery solving quest.

You'll be astonished...

near fainting...

puzzled...

and at times in deep thought.

Egyptian Exhibit in the museum dominated by the priceless 'Dagger of Amon Ra,' then we had it stolen. Having just started a new job as a newspaper reporter, Laura Bow is assigned to write the burglary story. Then, when Laura arrives at the museum, people start dropping dead all over the place."

Bruce delved into his research, covering Egyptology, hieroglyphics, museum security and interesting methods for doing away with people. San Jose's Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum turned out to be quite a valuable resource, as did used bookstores. Bruce adds:

"Trying to be as realistic as possible, while still maintaining some humor in the game, I worked out a variety of ways to kill people, using books on criminology, poisons and related subjects. Considering the limited forensic technology of 1926, criminology was still an infant science based on observation of the crime scene and the corpse. Today, you can analyze the DNA from a dried blood sample, learning almost everything you need to know about the murderer, including his current address and his favorite food. However, evidence in this game had to be based on things Laura could find with her naked eye, such as bits of fabric, hair, notes, and objects normally associated with particular characters."

Storyboarding and art began on the game, and the artists avidly latched on to the sophisticated, cosmopolitan look of the Leyendecker art. For the backgrounds,



You'll see magnificent, large-scale hand-painted graphics of the opulent society of the 1920's. Several characters arrive from Egypt along with priceless artifacts.

Bruce and his team turned to the Warner Brothers photo archives. Anyone with access to those archives might be able to pick specific locations and buildings out of the extraordinary background paintings.

To create the characters, Production Designer Andy Hoyos created rough sketches of how the characters might look, Leyendecker-style, to reflect their personalities. To bring these

characters to life and to ensure realistic movements, actors were hired and authentically costumed. They were then videotaped and touched up in a method known as "rotoscoping" to bring out the fine details that may have been lost in the transition from tape to computer. Footage was taken of every actor performing every conceivable motion in the game; this generates a massive amount of animation art. The end result is incredibly lifelike animation that beautifully recreates every nuance of action and emotion.

The overall feel of *Laura Bow II: The Dagger Of Amon Ra* is a fascinating combination of realism and whimsy. Authentic period music, costumes and locations are melded seamlessly with Art Deco styling and dramatic storytelling. The effect is one of total immersion in the period.

You might say it's the sort of classic you'd find only in a museum. 



Laura arrives at Grand Central station by train as a cub newspaper reporter. Unknowingly she's stepped into the mystery of a lifetime.



Victims are sometimes found murdered by strange and bizarre methods. This is one bird dropping that's murder.



You'll explore the dark, dank storage rooms of the museum, and who knows what you may find. Ancient Egyptian artifacts, animal skeletons, and fearsome mummies.



You'll attend a posh social banquet in the rotunda of the museum where a massive ancient Egyptian exhibit has just opened. But there are more untold secrets to discover...



In the Leyendecker style, Andy Hoyos created rough sketches of the characters that would play a role in this Laura Bow mystery-thriller. Then, each character was animated using Sierra's advanced video-capture technique to produce life-like movements and realistic acting throughout the entire game.



Joseph Christian Leyendecker

was born March 23, 1874, at Montabour, a tiny village on the Rhine in southwest Germany. Leyendecker's father brought him, his brother, sister and mother to Chicago in 1882.

J.C. Leyendecker was a very private individual, and little is known about his personal life. The brief self-profile of his early life he provided for *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1938 is a rare and touching look at the artist:

"The Leyendeckers are of Dutch ancestry, though we came to America in 1882 from Montabour. I was eight at the time and was already covering school books with rudely colored examples of my work. At home I kept myself busy with more pretentious paintings which, for want of canvas, were done on oilcloth of the common kitchen variety.

"When I was sixteen, I felt I'd reached the saturation point in the oilcloth field. So I decided to find a job and gain some practical experience in the profession of being an artist.

I still remember boarding a cable car one windy day with three large canvases wrapped in newspaper and fighting my way through the crowded streets to an engraving house where I showed my samples.

The boss inspected a stag at bay, a chariot race and a Biblical subject with amusement, but he did tell me to report for work. I was an apprentice without pay—with a chance to learn the art business."

One of the leading illustrators of the age, his artwork is still as loved and respected as it was in the 1920's.

HOW TO CREATE A MYSTERY:

The Recipe for The Dagger of Amon Ra

by Laura Bow, Cub Reporter



Ever since my near-demise at Colonel Dijon's plantation last year, people have been asking me what it was like to be

in the middle of a murder mystery. My best advice is for you to cook up your own.

If you really want your mystery to be good, you need a mysterious setting, like a huge, imposing, spooky museum. Why, anything could happen there!

Next you will need a spicy mix of suspicious characters. Take a look at the people below for a saucy sampling.

Now it's time for a crime. The theft of a priceless Egyptian artifact, for instance. But don't expect it to end there! Some people would kill for The Dagger of Amon Ra...

Next, throw in a multitude of motives, a slew of suspects, plenty of plot twists,

and the occasional red herring for flavor. Seal the building, and mix well! Be sure to give it plenty of time to heat up, and let the tension rise...Hmm, there's something about that particular mystery mixture that makes me uneasy. I can't quite put my finger on why...Oh well. Have fun making your own mystery!



The eerie atmosphere of a haunting natural history museum sets the stage for an edge-of-the-keyboard murder mystery. Each echoing step brings you closer to solving a murder or becoming a victim.



Dr. Archibald Carrington III:
Mysterious museum president.



Countess Lavinia Waldorf-Carlton:
Merry widow or black widow?



Dr. Olympia Myklos:
Curator with a taste for the macabre.



Pippin Carter:
Oddball archaeologist.



Dr. Ptahsheptu "Tut" Smith:
Egyptologist with a past.



Ryan Hanrahan O'Riley:
One of New York's Finest?



Laura Bow:
Hey, I'm not suspicious!



Wolf Himmler:
Museum security chief with an attitude.



Steve Dorian:
Romantic interest or ruthless rogue?



Yvette Delacroix:
Loyal friend or shady lady?



Rameses Najeer:
More than just an accountant?



Ziggy:
He'll tell you anything for a price.

Laura Bow II: The Dagger of Amon Ra will be released in Spring 1992!

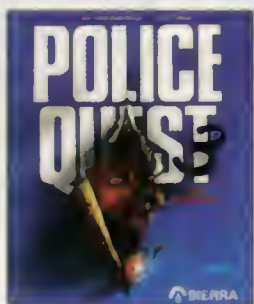
SIERRA'S TOP TEN

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



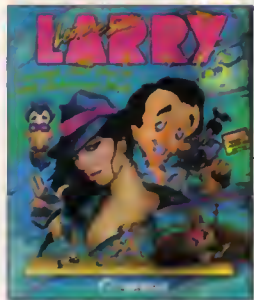
1. *Conquests of the Longbow:*

The year is 1193. The place is England. King Richard Lionheart has been captured in Austria. Wicked Prince John is doing everything in his power to prevent the king's ransom from being delivered, and the people are suffering under his cruel and brutal reign. Only you can save them, good Robin Hood. You are the last hope of your country and your king...



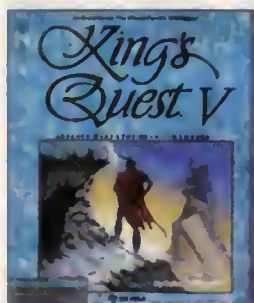
2. *Police Quest 3*

It's the grittiest, toughest, most intense and realistic Police Quest yet. Jessie Bains' brother is out for revenge, and the target is Sonny's wife. You've got to keep your cool and stick to police procedure, because one mistake could be fatal. But if you die it won't be from boredom! Digitized live actors make this game frighteningly real.



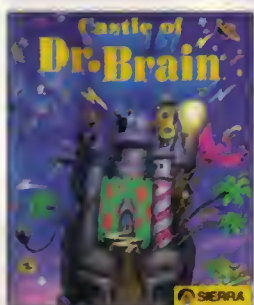
3. *Leisure Suit Larry 5*

Look at love from both sides of the gene pool! You'll play both Larry and Patti in this latest looney chapter in the life of everyone's favorite super-nerd. This time Larry's got to find a hostess for a primetime porn show, but he's up to his eyes in spies. Uh-oh, one of them is Patti! So why is the mob out to get them both? Will they survive Larry 5?



4. *King's Quest V: Absence Makes the Heart Go Yonder*

Good King Graham's family is missing, along with the whole royal castle. Aided only by a talking owl named Cedric, you must face the dangers of the dark forest, scale towering mountains, cross a burning desert and a cursed sea as you try to rescue the royal family. It's an epic contest of wits and magic!



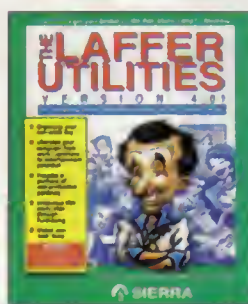
5. *Castle of Dr. Brain*

Your mission is to win a job as the famous Dr. Brain's lab assistant, but first you must pass his gauntlet of mind-twisting puzzles and challenges. You'll have to solve 3-D mazes, win at word games, build the mysterious "jigsaw room", and even program robots! Great puzzles and wild graphics give you hours of challenging fun and adventure.



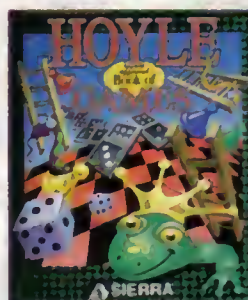
6. *Willy Beamish*

Enter the wild world of Willy Beamish. He's just a normal kid with a yuppie mom, a neurotic dad, and two ultra-pesky sisters. His best friend is the ghost of his grandfather. Then there's the party-animal pet jumping frog, the school bully, a demonic babysitter, ninja tourists, evil industrialists... childhood was never quite like this!



7. *Laffer Utilities*

Let Leisure Suit Larry, inefficiency expert, teach you how to waste time at work effectively! The Laff-man has designed a program for everything you do at the office that has nothing to do with work. Look busy while you create office pools and lotteries, read jokes and play games. *Laffer Utilities* is America's favorite non-productivity tool!



8. *Hoyle Book of Games Volume III*

This collection of favorite board and dice games has something for everyone. Play Backgammon, Checkers, Dominoes and many others with your friends, or against your favorite Sierra characters! Some games even have lively animated playing pieces. Beginners can learn games for the first time, and experienced players will get a real challenge.



9. *Red Baron*

Soar back in time to World War I, when battle first took to the skies! Choose from 17 classic airplanes and fly spy missions, hunt zeppelins, or dogfight with the most deadly aces of the era. You can start a career, progressing in rank and skill as you gain experience. Red Baron is the most realistic and accurate World War I flight simulator ever!



10. (tie) *Mixed-Up Fairy Tales*

Five classic fairy tales have been mixed up by the cranky old Bookend, and it's up to your child to put them back together again.

Nova 9

High-octane fantasy simulator from the makers of *Stellar 7*. Blast off to nine planets and battle Draxon's forces on nine worlds of ever-increasing danger and difficulty!

DOUBT WHAT IS REALLY LIKE.

...dream of being a cop? Here's your chance:



...So authentic that you can almost
smell the cordite of the firing range and
see the glint on the handcuffs".

- Don Trivette
PC Magazine

"...Reality role playing".

- Computer Entertainer

ACT

Get the new *Police Quest I* VC for \$10.00 off

Just send us your *Police Quest I* VC
coupon, and we'll send you a \$10.00
Can you think of a better way?

Hurry!

Offer expires June 30, 1992

-Strategy and Tactics-

HOYLE

Volume 3

By Stuart Moulder

I was blown away the first time I sat down to play a game of *Checkers* in *Hoyle* Volume 3.

It wasn't the gorgeous graphics or the silky smooth interface that blew me away, however. Nor did the beautiful new tunes or the variety of games and opponents blow me away.

It was Roger Wilco's evil nemesis, that holographic arch-villain Vohaul that did it.

His flickering image sneered and laughed as he methodically destroyed me in three straight games of *Checkers*. I couldn't stand to let this intergalactic terror get the best of me, so I switched games. *Dominoes*, I thought, would be his weakness.

But it wasn't so, and Vohaul easily disposed of me. His gloating image and sarcastic remarks drove me to challenge him in every other game: *Yacht*, *Backgammon*, *Pachisi*, and *Snakes and Ladders*.

Only in *Snakes and Ladders* did I have any success, but I could hardly congratulate myself on triumphing at a children's game. I was forced to admit that in games of strategy, Vohaul had the upper hand. Not content with this state of affairs, I turned to the other opponents in *Hoyle* 3, hoping that Sierra's greatest heroes could give me some strategy tips.

(continued next page)

Checkers

The first family of Daventry graciously agreed to watch me play *Checkers* and give me some tips to improve my play. King Graham didn't need to observe many moves before he drew me aside for some kind words of advice.

"*Checkers* is simple to learn, and that simplicity can be deceptive. You must have a plan of attack; it is not enough to push pieces forward haphazardly. Look at the board carefully. Notice how your opponent's right flank has a double corner." King Graham waited for me to respond.

"Double corner?" I replied. Then peering at the board, I saw what he meant. "Ah yes, his back rank has an adjacent square on the side of the board, but only on the right side."

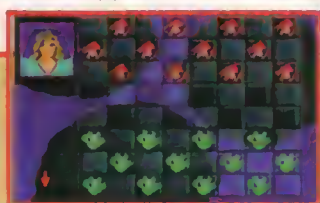
"Exactly! That adjacent square is a vulnerable space. You should focus your attacks towards that area. Conversely, your opponent will be doing the same to you, so be sure to defend that area well. You will need to keep the piece in the far right back square at home to defend that area of the board.

"Right!" Rosella joined in, "And you should also avoid moving the second piece from the left on the back rank. Those two pieces can guard all four back rank squares."

King Graham nodded at his daughter's words, "Rosella is correct. Another important strategy is to control the center of the board. Notice how pieces in the center four squares have the best opportunities for further movement. This also means you should avoid moving pieces to the side squares. They may feel safer there, but they are ineffective and have little room for future movement.

"Speaking of freedom of movement, you should really move the piece in the back rank on the far left as soon as possible. It's starting position affords it little opportunity for movement and it's position does not enhance your defense appreciably."

"Dad's right," Rosella said, "But here's an even more important thought for you to ponder. *Checkers* is really a game of not making mistakes. Even a one piece advantage can determine the outcome of a game. It is easy to be tricked into an error and very hard to recover from one. Watch out for forced jumps that put you in a position to be double-jumped by your opponent. Of course, you can use this to your advantage. Use forced jumps to gain access to your opponent's back rank. And look for opportunities to trick your opponent into uneven exchanges.



Be sure to protect the two adjacent squares on the lower right side.



Avoid playing the sides. Try to control the center of the board.



You only need two pieces to protect your back row. Move the others out.

Backgammon

I next turned my thoughts to *Backgammon*. *Backgammon*'s mix of luck and strategy is addictive, but frustrating for beginners trying to figure out the best way to play the game. An unlikely pair of Sierra characters gave me some sage advice - Mother Goose and Jones.

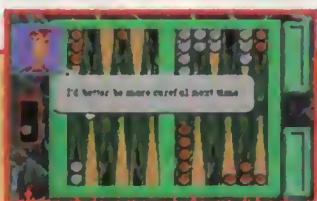
"Sweetie, you need to pay more attention to how you move your pieces," Mother Goose advised, "If you move too many at once, you're bound to leave some unprotected. And you can bet that mean old Vohaul is sure to capture any exposed pieces."

I nodded my head, feeling a bit foolish. Jones piped in, "Yeah, you should focus on creating blocked areas. Try to set up blocks on several points in a row. This will create a barrier that is very hard for your opponent to pass. You know you have your opponent in trouble if they have to pass because you've blocked all their moves."

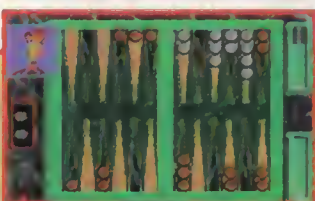
"Another thing, sweetie," Mother Goose added, "You may want to leave those last two pieces of yours alone for a while. They can help you recover some ground if your opponent gets too far ahead. They can always be used to capture an opponent's piece. And they also block one of the points in that last area."

"Here's a tricky thought for you," Jones added, "Sometimes it is unwise to capture your opponent's pieces. For instance, if your pieces are near the goal and not all protected, you may just be providing an opportunity for him to capture one of your pieces. And sometimes you will want to be captured for the same reason - so you have a chance to capture an opponent's piece that is near the goal."

"And don't forget that you should challenge Beginning and Average players first, if you are having a hard time winning," concluded Mother Goose.



Just when you thought you had the upper hand you can get 'bumped'.



Setting up several blocks in a row will keep your opponent at bay.



Don't move too many pieces at once. Some will be unprotected.

Dominoes

Having mastered the basic tactics of *Checkers* and *Backgammon*, I felt ready for another challenge - *Dominoes*.

As with *Checkers*, I thought *Dominoes* was a simple game from my childhood. A quick humiliation by Vohaul convinced me that there is more to the game than matching numbers on dominoes. Fortunately, Larry Laffer was more than willing to help.

"Hey baby, you can't just plunk down any old domino that matches. You gotta think about what you're doing," Larry grinned and shook his head at me, "*Dominoes* is a lot like life, nothing is certain, but you can stack the odds in your favor.

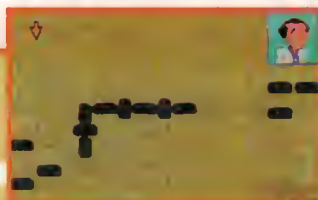
"Here's an easy trick to use," Larry continued, "Try to play a domino so that both ends have matching numbers. This gives your opponent only one choice to use in playing. It may not prevent him from playing, but it will make it harder.

"Try to play on the end your opponent just played on." I looked puzzled, so Larry explained, "See, if you do that, you may be preventing your opponent from playing because he may have been planning on playing on that end himself. Also, sometimes he will play on that end because he couldn't play on the other end. So you have two chances to frustrate your opponent this way."

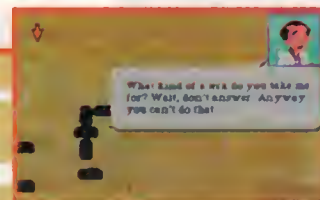
At my look of understanding, Larry smiled, "Some last thoughts. Remember what numbers your opponent couldn't play on and try to play those. Also, near the end of your hand, try to set up a combination that will let you play out no matter which end your opponent plays on."



Block your opponent by playing the same number on both ends.



Try to always play the same end as your opponent. It's his weak spot.



There's no cheating allowed, as Larry will quickly point out.

Yacht

King Graham returned to help me with *Yacht*. He smiled at me, "I see you listened to my advice on *Checkers*. Very good. *Yacht* isn't quite so complex, but there are still some tricks to the game.

"First, you should save 'Chance' till later in the game. In the early going, you should attempt to score the high scoring categories. For example, if you roll a 'Full House' in the first or second roll, you should probably attempt to get a 'Four of a Kind' or a 'Yacht'. If you fail, you can still score a three of a kind.

"Later in the game, things get to be a bit tougher," King Graham continued, "You may need to score a zero in 'Yacht'. Since 'Yachts' are rolled only every few games, chances are that you won't really be losing anything. Also, it can be useful to save the 'One's' category for later in the game. If forced to take a zero in the 'One's' category, you only lose three points (or five in the worst possible case).

With a wink, King Graham passed on one last tip, "Don't try to roll to an inside straight. The odds are little better than they would be if you were playing cards."



Try to score the large numbers, straights, and four-of-a-kind first.



Never try to roll to an inside straight. The odds are stacked against you.



Remember, Yacht is rare. Be willing to take a 'zero' in that category.

Pachisi

"*Pachisi* is a lot of fun," said my tutor, Princess Rosella. "And like *Backgammon*, you might think that lucky dice rolls are the key to success. But, of course, that just isn't true! You have to stay on your toes and persevere to succeed at *Pachisi*. The first tip is to always keep at least two pieces on the board at any one time. This will prevent you from having to pass while your opponents continue to race towards home. To slow them down, use a blockade with two of your own pieces."

"I tried that," I exclaimed. "But when I had to break the blockade, I always got captured!"

"That can happen," Rosella replied, "So you should plan for it. Try setting up your blockades close to your entry space. That way if you get captured, you won't have lost much ground with those pieces."

"Another tip is to try and stay behind your opponent's pieces so that you are in position to capture them," Rosella went on, "Of course, you want to stay far enough ahead of any other opposing pieces that your own pieces can't get captured. And finally, don't end a move on an opponent's entry square!"

I thanked Rosella and the other Sierra heroes profusely. I knew that with their help and further practice on my part, I would be able to best the evil Vohaul at every game in *Hoyle 3*.



You must roll a '1' to get on the board. It's a mad dash to home.



Always try to keep two pieces together. This gives you a 'blockade'.



When you land on another player's piece, he has to start all over.

Nova

by David Selle

SURVIVAL GUIDE



Raven II

Tired of getting left out in the cold on Kryon? Want to find out how to keep your head above water on Hydros? Here are a few tips to make your Nova 9 experience more successful.

A sense of anticipation washes over you as you strap yourself into the Raven II. Despite the ominous undertones of S.A.R.A.H.'s briefing you feel confident in your mission and your equipment. Gir Draxon and his minions were no match for the Raven I, after all. A brief moment of warp disorientation passes and you find yourself on the ice planet of Kryon.

Smiling to yourself, you take aim at a group of diamond shaped objects and fire the Raven II's powerful cannon. The burster disappears in a fiery explosion, setting off a chain reaction that launches a swarm of homing missiles toward your tank. You attempt to flee but the Raven's shields are drained by the impact of a half dozen projectiles. Another explosion rocks your tank as a buzz bomb rams the Raven from behind.

Large cracks appear in your windshields. Seconds later, a pair of high velocity shells from a heavy tank slams into the Raven's engine compartment. Your radar display explodes and the damage indicator climbs into the danger zone. Before you can turn to face this latest threat, a flyer lines you up in its sight and unleashes a powerful volley of laser fire into your tank.

The alarm klaxon sounds and red emergency lights flash. Through the fractured windshield you watch another buzz bomb home in for the kill. Desperately you try to maneuver your crippled tank but you know it's too late... Your tank shudders a final

time. Bright pulses of energy dance across the control panel. Then the Raven explodes in a blinding fireball. You can almost hear the hollow echoes of Gir Draxon's malevolent laughter as you sink into oblivion.

If this sounds all too familiar, don't worry. With a little practice and a few tips you'll have Gir Draxon on the run in no time.

GENERAL TIPS

Hit and run

It's best not to stay in one place for long. If you take too much time to stop and line up a target in the Raven's sights it will give all the enemies in your vicinity a chance gang up on you. Targets that move are generally more of a threat to the Raven than those that do not.

Power modules (quick tip)

It's a good idea to look these over carefully before you pick them up. Each power pellet type has a unique color and shape combination. All the yellow pellets are "instant on" powers. These will be activated automatically when you pick them up, provided you have room for them in the Raven II's power module bank. You can drop an unwanted power by highlighting it and pressing the shift key.

Puzzling through it all

On several levels you will encounter puzzles. Some you must finish to leave the level while others will yield a desirable power when successfully completed. A variety of approaches are required to success-

fully navigate through them. Timing is important. Some puzzles require you to move (push) an object. Still others call for precise marksmanship. The more complicated puzzles will require several steps to solve them.

It depends on how you look at it

If you are having difficulty solving some of the force field puzzles, you may find it helpful to create a customized external "puzzle" view. Placing the game "camera" slightly above and a few tank lengths behind the Raven will give you a broader field of view and allow you to see the whole puzzle at once. This procedure can be found outlined in the game documentation.

A few words about the time scale

If you have a very fast machine or one that's a bit slow, you may find it easier to navigate some of the puzzles if you adjust the time scale on the control panel (press F10 on most machines). This will change the interval between the laser gate on and off states and will affect how far your tank travels through the air when you make a jump.



A 3D graphics view through the Raven II cockpit.

PLANET BY PLANET

Kryon (quick tip)

Face the flyers head on and their shots will miss wide of the Raven.

The Boss

You can't damage this arctic juggernaut from the front, his plow blade is much too tough for your shots to penetrate. To blow this snow plow away, you need quick reflexes and a sharp eye. Locate him on the Raven's radar and come to a complete stop. Eventually, he will turn towards you and make an attack run at high speed. Move your tank out of his path at the last moment. After he scoots past you, his backside will be vulnerable for a few moments while he turns to line up for his next pass. Take careful aim and let him have it with the Raven's cannon. You will have to repeat this procedure several times to kill him.

Hydros (quick tip)

If you get behind the seekers the boss launches at you on this level they will self-destruct. There is a teleporter on this level which will take you back to your base. Sparky will repair the Raven and if it isn't shot up too badly he will install weapon upgrades. It's a good idea to wait until the end of the level before using the teleporter if you can hold out that long.

Sauria (quick tip)

Get up close and personal with the Triceratanks: their shots will pass over the Raven at short range.

The Boss

Save the invincibility power from Hydros to use while fighting the salamander boss on this world. You can only hit the salamander from the front and while its mouth is open (it may take you a few tries to get the timing down). It is easier to hit the Salamander's mouth with the Raven's fast-firing lasers, but they won't kill him as quickly as the main cannon.

Searon (quick tip)

Use Eel shields to take out the pop-up cannons.

The Boss

To defeat the boss on Searon you must go through Sparky's transporter

on this level. But first you have to overcome the force field surrounding it. The quickest way to drop the force field around the purple teleporter is to use the ramp and a mine. Pick up the turbo speed pellets located near the front of the ramp and line the Raven up with the bomb using the radar (the bomb is the large square object inside the blue force field on the opposite side of the ramp from the power pellets). Select mines as the current weapon. Activate the Raven's turbos and quickly drop a mine as you sail over the bomb. Finally, if all goes well, the mine will land on the bomb, detonating it and dropping the force field around the teleporter. You may require a few tries to accomplish this...

Pestula (quick tip)

Use the bursters on this world to kill the mosquitos.

The Boss

Save a heavy shell (the big slow blue ones) to use against the centipede boss on this level. Aim carefully, if you break the centipede into pieces, he will generate a new head for each section you break off. A well placed shot from behind with a heavy shell will take out several body sections at once.

Typhieus (quick tip)

There is an invulnerability power on this level. Use it if you don't want to risk taking damage getting to Sparky's teleporter.

The Boss

The seemingly inert black structures are the key to defeating him. Check them out after he appears in the world.

Teflar (quick tip)

Use Eel shields to take out the bumper cars on this level.


The Boss

Don't shoot the bursters on this level until the boss appears.

Matricon (quick tip)

Go through Sparky's teleporter as soon as you reach this level.

Malevolon (quick tip)

Use mines to take out the O.J.1000's when they get on your tail. 

Darter



Montrose



O.J. 1000



Phoenix



Ptera



Wobbly



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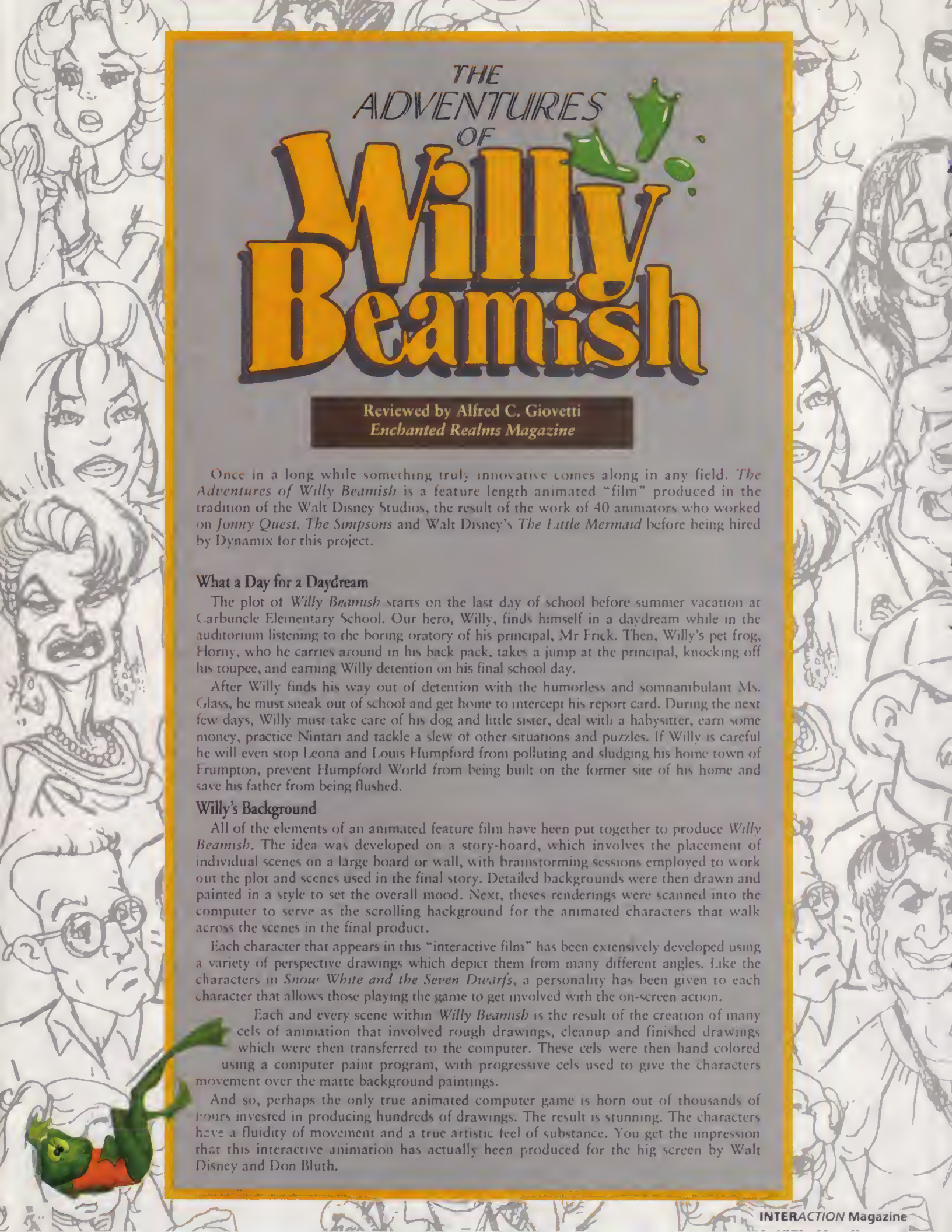
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THE ADVENTURES OF **Willy Beamish**

Reviewed by Alfred C. Giovetti
Enchanted Realms Magazine

Once in a long while something truly innovative comes along in any field. *The Adventures of Willy Beamish* is a feature length animated "film" produced in the tradition of the Walt Disney Studios, the result of the work of 40 animators who worked on *Jonny Quest*, *The Simpsons* and Walt Disney's *The Little Mermaid* before being hired by Dynamix for this project.

What a Day for a Daydream

The plot of *Willy Beamish* starts on the last day of school before summer vacation at Carbuncle Elementary School. Our hero, Willy, finds himself in a daydream while in the auditorium listening to the boring oratory of his principal, Mr Frick. Then, Willy's pet frog, Horny, who he carries around in his back pack, takes a jump at the principal, knocking off his toupee, and earning Willy detention on his final school day.

After Willy finds his way out of detention with the humorless and somnambulant Ms. Glass, he must sneak out of school and get home to intercept his report card. During the next few days, Willy must take care of his dog and little sister, deal with a babysitter, earn some money, practice Nintari and tackle a slew of other situations and puzzles. If Willy is careful he will even stop Leona and Louis Humpford from polluting and sludging his home town of Frumpton, prevent Humpford World from being built on the former site of his home and save his father from being flushed.

Willy's Background

All of the elements of an animated feature film have been put together to produce *Willy Beamish*. The idea was developed on a story-board, which involves the placement of individual scenes on a large board or wall, with brainstorming sessions employed to work out the plot and scenes used in the final story. Detailed backgrounds were then drawn and painted in a style to set the overall mood. Next, these renderings were scanned into the computer to serve as the scrolling background for the animated characters that walk across the scenes in the final product.

Each character that appears in this "interactive film" has been extensively developed using a variety of perspective drawings which depict them from many different angles. Like the characters in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, a personality has been given to each character that allows those playing the game to get involved with the on-screen action.

Each and every scene within *Willy Beamish* is the result of the creation of many cels of animation that involved rough drawings, cleanup and finished drawings which were then transferred to the computer. These cels were then hand colored using a computer paint program, with progressive cels used to give the characters movement over the matte background paintings.

And so, perhaps the only true animated computer game is horn out of thousands of hours invested in producing hundreds of drawings. The result is stunning. The characters have a fluidity of movement and a true artistic feel of substance. You get the impression that this interactive animation has actually been produced for the big screen by Walt Disney and Don Bluth.

The Eyes and Ears Have it

Music composer, Chris Stevens, used a computerized production system to integrate digitized music and sound effects into the final product. *Willy Beamish* has a real musical score (without singing) which sets the mood for each different scene. The music is engaging and quite entertaining. Perhaps when the CD-ROM version of the game comes out they will add voices to some of the music.

The colors used in this adventure are bright and cheerful. Bright yellow, blue, red, orange and green are employed to set the cartoon-like feel of this interactive movie. These colors brighten up the action and make the scenes more interesting and engaging to the eyes.

It's Not Polite to Point-N-Click

The interface is very simple and easy to use. For menu selections, one should use a combination of cursor keys and the spacebar to select. In order to pick up and inspect items of interest, a pointing device, such as a mouse, may be more efficient. A joystick is not supported by the game. You can use the shift-tab and tab keys to jump around the active portions of the background. The right mouse button emulates the return key and the left mouse button emulates the spacebar. Many people prefer two-handed play, and *Willy Beamish* leaves both the keyboard and the mouse active simultaneously.

Hot-keys allow for the direct access of many game functions. A quick inspection of the help facility will give you a comprehensive list, which you may wish to write down since no command summary sheet is provided with the game.

The cursor in *Willy Beamish* resembles the interactive cursor seen in other Dynamix games. When you move it around the screen, the cursor changes from a simple arrow to a large red action activation arrow, to a conversation bubble, to a throwing or aiming crosshair, or to an exit sign. Simply clicking while these special function cursors are active will allow you to access certain items or exit the screen.

Items can be inspected by activating the magnifying glass with the right mouse button or the return key. Inspection gives you additional information about items, or hints on how they are used. (While in Willy's room, click several times on the Starship Enterprise mobile and you will be rewarded with a dialogue between Captain Kirk and Engineer Scotty, who seem to be involved in a space battle.)

For mundane chores, the function screen is just an Escape key away. It allows you to save, restore, quit, pause and resume your game. The function screen also allows you to toggle the music and sound effects on or off, if these begin to get on your nerves, and gives you access to the extensive on-line help facilities to be discussed later.

Save Me, Willy!

Willy Beamish has a very sophisticated, Sierra-like save game screen. You are allowed to change the directory and to save games under any name you would like. Though you are limited to 20 save games per directory, as many directories can be set up as necessary, providing for infinite saves. In addition, only two kilobytes are needed to save each game, allowing for the storage of hundreds of games on one floppy disk.

Bottomless Backpacks

Willy's inventory is his school backpack, which appears to have an infinite capacity. I really tried to load it up, and I never

ran out of room. Items are picked up and brought off the bottom of the screen to be used in the area around Willy. From within the backpack, the time can be advanced by minutes or hours simply by activating the single right arrow or double right arrows at the top of the inventory display. Inadvertently dropped items are not lost, but are automatically placed back into Willy's inventory.

When in Doubt...

The help facility in *Willy Beamish* is very sophisticated and can be accessed by activating the question mark bar from the functions screen. A very colorful screen with Willy pondering over a question, while surrounded with colorful question marks, is quickly overlaid with a help menu which can be used to access the features.

This on-line help takes the place of print based documentation. Willy comes with only a small spiral bound notebook including some scribbled hints and background information, a pizza menu and instructions on how to install the game. Most of the instructions on how to use the game itself are located in the help facility. A quick inspection of this area before you begin to play the games is advised.

Sequence of Events

The beginning sequence is well worth the time it takes to look it over once and listen to the entertaining music. After that, the spacebar can be used to bypass the introduction and restore a saved game.

In addition to the help system built into *Willy Beamish*, Sierra has provided additional assistance for the gamer who gets stuck (for both Sierra and Dynamix products). They have established an Automated Hint Line [1-900-370-5583, in California 1-900-370-5113] for those who want extra help, at 75 cents for the first minute and 50 cents for each additional minute. The real bargain, however, is the 72-page hint book for \$9.95, which includes ten pages on the making of *Willy Beamish*.

A Classic Adventure

Willy is a true classic. It teaches some basic principles like honesty is the best policy and that responsibility avoids trouble. *Willy* also contains no pornographic content, so it can be enjoyed by children and adults alike. In fact, it resembles the classic animated films in that both transcend the generation gap by appealing equally to children and adults. Here is a game that both parents and their children can enjoy together, regardless of their ages. Other than the minor annoyances mentioned above, I highly recommend *Willy Beamish* to all who enjoy animated films and those who enjoy animated adventures.



...They'd be full of the kinda well-developed characters you've always wanted to watch...



...And the high-quality, wholesome cartoon violence your mother said would rot your brains right out.



Think how great cartoons could be if someone as twisted as you could call the shots...

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Pinball. A Breakthrough for Windows.™

New in 1992 from Sierra On-Line.

GREAT NEW GAME BUYS FOR WINDOWS™ SHOPPERS



The Laffer Utilities: For everything you do at the office that has nothing to do with work.

By Kurt Busch

A Window on a New World

I'm a Mac snob.

Like a lot of other people who make their living with a Macintosh, I've always sneered at the convoluted workings of MS-DOS. I have, however, been quite impressed with the way Microsoft Windows has overhauled the world of IBM compatibles, making it almost as fun, friendly, and efficient as my own little Mac universe.

I'd never seriously considered Windows for home, however, because the program seemed to neglect the one area where IBM compatibles blow away the competition: games.

Windows of Opportunity

With literally millions of people now running Windows, it's surprising that more Windows games haven't sprung up. Software publishers have taken a wait-and-see attitude, reluctant to develop games for a system that was largely an office phenomenon (though

Windows is now routinely bundled with 386 and 486 machines that often wind up in the home).

Now two industry leaders - Sierra On-Line and Dynamix - have moved into the world of Windows, creating games and programs that can be played (or played with) in short bursts and then returned to their proper little windows. In short, they've built games for the office.

Take a Break with Larry

With a twisted sort of logic that could only spring from the mind of Al Lowe, Sierra's first product built to run on Windows is *The Laffer Utilities*, a package of programs for "everything you do at the office that has nothing to do with work" (a non-Windows version is also available).

The Laffer Utilities is billed as the nation's "leading non-productivity tool". It contains 17 different programs, some of which are silly, some of which are outrageous, and some of which border dangerously on useful.

Printer functions (which support PostScript, HP Laser, Epson, IBM Graphics, and all

compatible printers) include programs for managing betting pools, generating signs, creating sign-up sheets, and whipping out real and ridiculous office forms.

For moments of mirth in an otherwise mundane Monday, Windows users can click up silly sayings, an interactive joke data base (with a variable 'Filth Ome'eter'), a sleazy tabloid headline writer, or a cynical set of horoscope predictions. If you get caught in the process, *The Laffer Utilities* even includes an instant excuse generator.

The package also contains some actually helpful programs (a telephone database, birthday reminder autoexec, special message screens), all of which are thankfully rendered with Al Lowe's irreverent sense of the absurd. You can even customize one program to help you decide where to go for lunch.

The Windows version of *The Laffer Utilities* is already on the shelves with a suggested list price of \$39.95.

Flipper Fever in the Office

Pinball, Dynamix's new game for Windows, is

proceeding under such a shroud of secrecy we could only get one screen shot for this issue.

Dynamix describes it as an animated VGA pinball pack, designed specifically for Windows. Six quick loading pinball games - complete with storylines, multiple playing fields, and zany animation - are just a mouse click away.

Pinball is the first in a series of Windows-only games that will feature full icon and multi-tasking support. Click on *Pinball* in the middle of a particularly hairy work day and you'll get instant full window sizing support. It's the perfect quick break; an oasis of instant recreation in a wasteland of spreadsheets and memos.

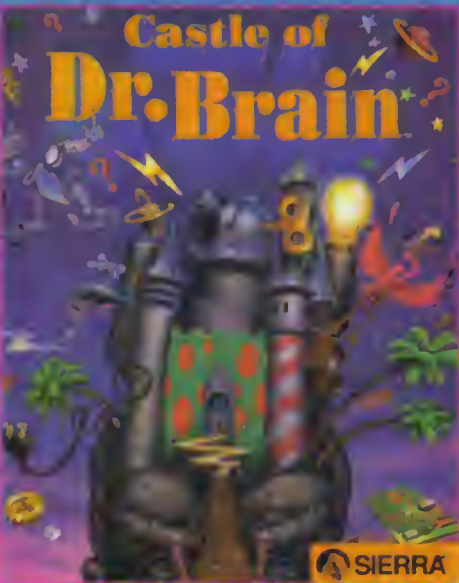
The six pinball games included allow you to play themes from Sierra and Dynamix adventure games, including *Space Quest*, *King's Quest*, *Nova 9*, *Leisure Suit Larry*, and *The Adventures of Willy Beamish*. There's also a spoof on climbing the corporate ladder called *Mr. Hosehead*.

Pinball is scheduled to ship in April and will carry a suggested list price of \$49.95.



Pinball from Dynamix lets you click on six quick-loading pinball games featuring different Sierra game characters like Passionate Patti, Gir Draxon, and Roger Wilco.

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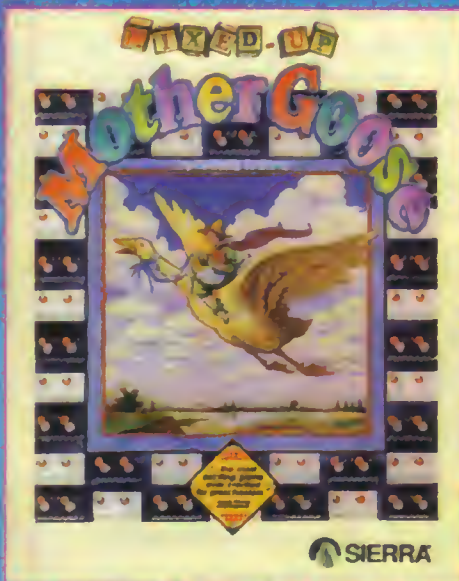
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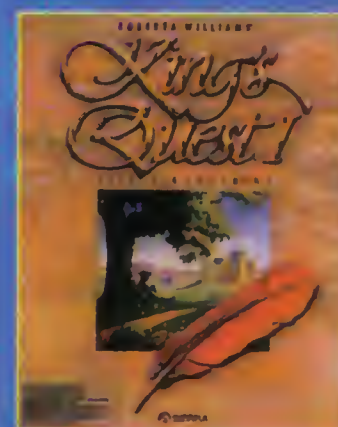
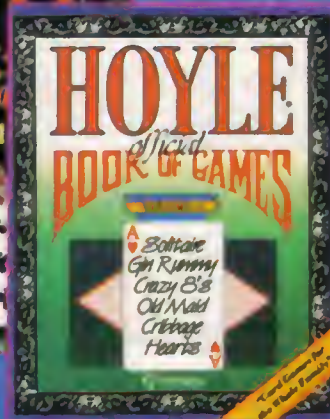
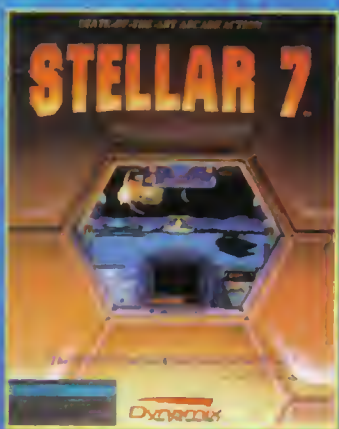
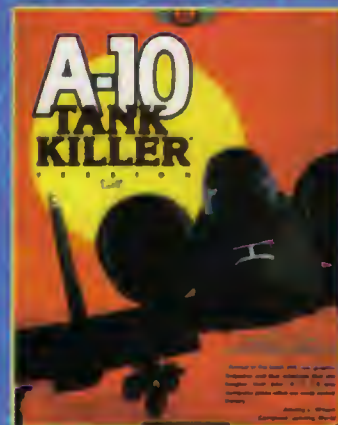
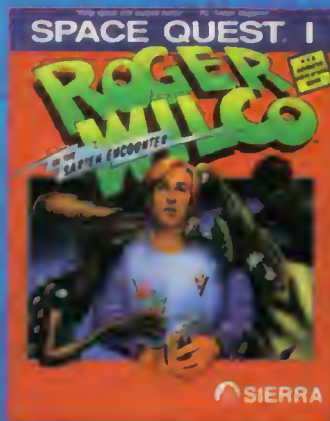
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MAC TO THE MAX

Sierra's New Games for the Macintosh



by Lorelei Shannon

Okay, let's face it: In the past, even the best Mac games didn't take full advantage of Mac technology, but wait until you see the new crop. Sierra On-Line, the leader in high-end MS-DOS games, has re-dedicated itself to the Mac. Their new games for the Macintosh are custom-designed in 256 blazing colors. You get all the exciting action, the vibrant graphics and 3-D animation, and the stereo soundtracks that Sierra is famous for.

These games run on 8 bit color Macs only. (No black and whites or 16 colors.) You will need at least 2 Meg RAM, a SuperDrive, and a Hard Disk to run them.

You will need System 6.05 or better to run Space Quest IV or Rise of the Dragon, or system 6.07 or better to run all other 256 color games. These games are fully System 7 compatible and Multifinder friendly, if your computer has enough memory to support these options.

Sierra's graphics now look beautiful on the Mac. They are automatically resized to fit Macintosh monitors, including the 12" color monitor. (This option is not available on computers with 12" color monitors running Dynamix games.) The graphics are algorithmically adjusted to conform to the aspect ratio of Macintosh displays, so you won't get distortion.

Three screen sizes are available to you, not just one tiny one. Choose from 320x200, 480x350, or 640x480. They all look great. (Note: Not all of these screen options will be available on every system.)

Sierra and Dynamix are now using a 4-voice driver with sampled instruments for music enhancement, to give you the finest gaming experience possible. With over 300K of sampled instruments, you won't believe what you're hearing. Add the Roland CM32L sound module, and hear music like you've never heard it before! (The Roland sound option is not available on all games.)

Sierra and Dynamix' game music is now played as a soundtrack, with additional simultaneous sound effects - no interruptions in the musical score.

These very latest Mac games, starting with King's Quest V, use true Macintosh fonts for titles and textboxes. The elegant script font in KQV is just one of the little details that come together to make Sierra's new Mac games good.

Of course, the game interface is wholly mouse-driven. No typing required. (The Dynamix games use a unique keyboard/mouse option.)

Sierra is always improving their technology, and they try to make it work for you in the best ways possible. Check out the new Mac games that are now available to you:



Rescue and Romance
Heart of China is a globe-spanning, exotic adventure



Intrigue and Action
Laugh yourself hoopy when you play Leisure Suit Larry 5



Laughs in Space
Meet charming and bizarre characters in Space Quest IV



Enchanting Excitement
Explore the magical land of Dacentry in King's Quest V



Darkness and Danger
Enter an exciting film noir future in Rise of the Dragon

MegaMac: The Very Best

Space Quest IV

Join Roger Wilco and the Time Rippers on this hysterical romp through space, time, and a really big mall. Don't shop too long, though, because the Sequel Police are right behind you. With scrolling screens, awesome graphics, a rock 'n roll soundtrack, and a no-typing, point-and-click interface.

King's Quest V

King Graham returns home to find that his family, along with his entire castle, has vanished! You'll brave a dark forest, scale icy mountains, cross a burning desert and a deadly ocean as you try to rescue the royal family. With hand-painted graphics, 3-D animation, a stereo soundtrack, and a no-typing, point-and-click interface.

Rise of the Dragon

The year is 2050. It is the Age of Decay in Los Angeles, and an ancient evil has sensed that the time is right for its return. William "Blade" Hunter, renegade P.I., is the only one who can stop the Rise of the Dragon. With hand-painted graphics, complex character interaction, and a haunting stereo soundtrack.

Leisure Suit Larry 5

Patti's a spy for the FBI. Larry's a videotape rewinder for a primetime porn show. Why aren't they together? Why is the Mob out to get them? Find out in this silly serving of sex, thugs, and rock 'n roll. With hot, hand-painted graphics, 3-D animation, a sizzling soundtrack, and a no-typing, point-and-grope interface.

Heart of China

She's the daughter of a ruthless American land baron, facing death in the mountains of China. He's a down-on-his-luck pilot with only 3 days to rescue her. Action, adventure, intrigue and romance in 1930's China await you. With cinemagraphic backgrounds, digitized live actors, and a beautiful stereo soundtrack.

Also see the Great War Planes insert in this issue.

by Lorelei Shannon

AMAZ

Games Creat



Adventure awaits you in King's Quest V



Try Leisure Suit Larry 5 for silly, sexy fun



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The world of King's Quest is one of peril and...
...tenting

ING AMIGA

ed with the Amiga in Mind

It seems Sierra has rediscovered the Amiga. In the process, they've completely re-written their approach to building Amiga games. The results are impressive.

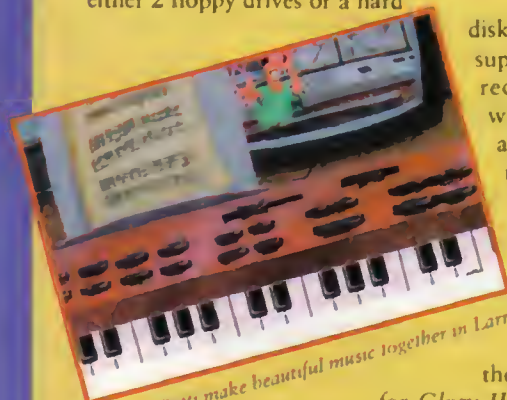


Exotic adventures abound in the Heart of China

Sierra's new Amiga adventure games are custom-designed in 32 color graphics. They have the 3-D animation and stereo soundtracks that Sierra is famous for, but they're specially enhanced for the Amiga.

These games take full advantage of the Amiga sound chip to provide multi-voice music and simultaneous, realistic sound effects. Sierra is using a 4-voice driver to give you the best sound possible.

These new custom Amiga games will run on all Amigas, from Amiga 500 to Amiga 3,000. All you need is 1 Meg RAM and either 2 floppy drives or a hard



Larry and Patti make beautiful music together in Larry 5

disk. (The hard disk is fully supported, and it's what we recommend). The games will automatically take advantage of all available memory on your Amiga.

OK, sure, you're thinking. But are they really any good?

Enchanted Realms, the premiere adventure gaming journal for the Amiga, awarded *Quest for Glory II* their Distinctive Adventure Award for 1990. The reviewer's final comment? "Do not walk to your local software store to pick up this game—RUN."

Sierra has custom Amiga versions of almost all of their top-of-the-line games.

KING'S QUEST V

The royal family of Daventry has been kidnapped! The castle has vanished without a trace! Journey with King Graham on a desperate quest to rescue his loved ones. A haunted forest, a wicked ice queen, a



The all-new Leisure Suit Larry 5 is a good bet

scorching desert, and sinister sea all stand between you and the royal family. With cinemagraphic hand-painted backgrounds, 3-D animation, a moving, stereo soundtrack, and a no-typing, point-and-click interface.

German and Spanish versions for the Amiga are now available.

SPACE QUEST IV

Rip time with Roger on this wild, silly journey through the fabric of reality. Look out, the Sequel Police are right behind you! They're out to make sure this is the last *Space Quest* ever. Featuring the first scrolling screens used in a Sierra adventure game, excellent graphics, a ripping rock 'n roll soundtrack, and a no-typing, point-and-click interface.

German and Spanish versions for the Amiga are now available.

LEISURE SUIT LARRY 5

Larry's got to pick a hostess for a primetime porn show. Patti's playing spy for the FBI. Help, the Mob is out to get them! Help Larry and Patti take on organized crime, the FBI, the music industry, and the Citizens Against Nearly Everything in this gender-bending romp! With funky, hand-painted graphics, 3-D animation, a swinging soundtrack, and a no-typing, point-and-grope interface.

HEART OF CHINA

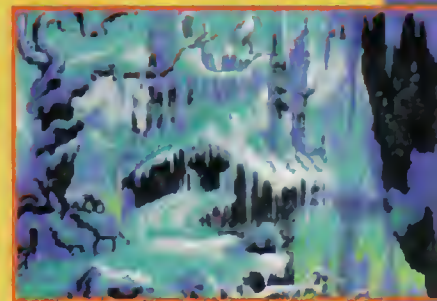
You're Lucky Jake Masters, a not-so-lucky pilot. You've got just three days to rescue the beautiful Kate Lomax from certain death. You'll find adventure, action, and romance in the exotic 1920's settings of *Heart of China*. With digitized live actors, cinemagraphic backgrounds, and a haunting stereo soundtrack.

RISE OF THE DRAGON

Flash into a grim future Los Angeles. A drug lord threatens the very life of the city, and a terrible new evil is waiting to be born. As renegade P.I. William "Blade" Hunter, you'll prowling the meanstreets of a film-noir future, but can you stop the rise of the Dragon? With hand-painted graphics, a sophisticated character interface, and a moody stereo soundtrack.

RED BARON

Soar back in time to World War I, when hattle first took to the skies. Fly on either side of the war, choosing from 28 different planes. Engage in close-range dogfights, hunt zeppelins, escort bombers deep into enemy territory, and take on such famous aces as the Red Baron himself. This is the most unbelievably realistic simulator you've ever seen.



Beautiful King's Quest locations can hide deadly dangers

Making Sense of

MULTIMEDIA HARDWARE

BY JOHN WILLIAMS

CURRENT STANDARD	MULTIMEDIA OFFERING	MAKER
PC DOS	PC with CD-ROM and SoundCard	IBM and Clones
PC Windows	MPC	Microsoft and Others
Macintosh	Macintosh multimedia	Apple Computer, Inc.
Amiga	CDTV	Commodore Intl.
Nintendo	16-bit Nintendo with CD-ROM	Nintendo and Others
Sega	16-bit Sega with CD-ROM	Sega
VHS, Audio CD	CDI	Philips and Others

Multimedia is a neat new buzz word. While no two magazines or hardware manufacturers agree on exactly what multimedia is, everyone seems to agree it includes better graphics, sound and animation. Great, but what is it? What hardware will it run on? How much will it cost? No one seems to be able to give a decisive, or even understandable answer to these questions.

Lately, many writers have decided that the industry is too confused about multimedia and is therefore confusing the buying public. Buyers who don't understand multimedia won't buy something they don't understand. To make matters worse, they support their contention that multimedia is confused by explaining multimedia in as complicated a manner as possible.

Well, this article isn't about the confusion of multimedia. Instead it's an attempt to make sense of the hardware involved.

Understanding multimedia hardware is much the same as understanding the current computer platform selections. You still have the IBMs, the Apples, the Nintendos and the Amigas. You also have other manufacturers with other competing products. In the end though, it's hardware manufacturers trying to sell the product they've built. If you understand this, the rest is easier.

Let's start by looking at the simple chart which is shown on this page.

The left hand column lists a computer or consumer electronics product. You are probably familiar with all of these systems and own one or more of them.

The middle column lists the comparable multimedia standard. For instance, CDTV is basically a customized Commodore Amiga with a CD ROM drive and without a keyboard, and MPC is basically a Windows-based PC with a soundcard. The multimedia offerings are all better than the computer or video game system they come from (possible exception - CDTV). CDI is really sort of a mixture of the audio CD and VHS, which we will explain later.

The right hand column lists the main manufacturers of the new Multimedia technology. In most cases, a single vendor is listed. If you keep these vendor names in mind you'll probably be ahead of the game.

As you can see, there are a lot of formidable names on this list. Some names like IBM, Microsoft and Apple are well known to every computer owner and no one on Earth can escape the Nintendo and Sega advertising these days. Any one of these companies could forge a new hardware standard. Philips, which is a name you may not recognize, is perhaps the most formidable player of them all. Philips is the huge consumer electronics conglomerate that developed the standard for the Audio CD, the heralded VHS format for video.

But, as IBM proved when it tried to sell America the PCjr, and as Sony found out when it introduced Betamax, it takes a lot more than marketing muscle to define the future. It takes a combination of good hardware, good software, the right pricing and more. Let's take a look at the standards individually to get a feel for where things are going with multimedia hardware.



MINIMUM HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS FOR MULTIMEDIA PCS:

- 80386 based PC
- 2 megabytes of RAM
- 4-bit VGA graphics adapter/VGA monitor
- 3.5 inch, 1.44 megabyte floppy disk drive
- Serial/parallel/joystick ports
- 30 megabyte hard disk
- CD-ROM with CD-DA (Compact Disk Digital Audio) outputs
- 101-key keyboard
- 2-button, Microsoft-compatible mouse
- MS-DOS 3.30, 3.31, or 4.01
- Windows 3.0 with multimedia extensions
- Audio support:
 - 8-or 16-bit DAC converter, DMA and interrupt
 - 8-or 16-bit linear analog-to-digital converter (ADC)
 - Music synthesizer
 - Digitally controlled analog audio mixer
 - MIDI-in / MIDI-out

(Note: This is a minimum configuration. Additional RAM and a faster microprocessor will provide better performance.)

-From Tandy's "Multimedia - More than you Imagined"



THE DOS PLATFORM FOR MULTIMEDIA

The DOS platform for multimedia isn't really a standard at all, but something that has begun to evolve over time. Take any MS-DOS computer, add any of the miscellaneous sound cards, any of the CD-ROM drives, and mix liberally. While these mix and match machines may have the components it takes to perform multimedia applications, the lack of clear hardware specifications makes this kind of

"If not for the fact that DOS computers represent that dominate installed base of computers today, this multimedia standard might not be worth mentioning"

machine hard to support from a software standpoint. Without knowing the speed of the CPU, the proper device drivers for the soundcard, the speed of the CD-ROM drive etc. leaves many software publishers scratching their head and wondering what components they should write their software around.

IBM has announced work on some extensions to this basic operating system to try to tie it all together, but most of the developers have watched IBM's recent track record with products like OS/2 and are taking a "wait and see" approach rather than announcing any kind of support for big blue.

Because no one manufacturer or source is behind this standard, and it has evolved from users upgrading their machines in a disorganized fashion, the DOS platform for multimedia will emerge as a grass roots effort (if at all). Without the full support of Microsoft and other major PC compatible makers, its real acceptance as a standard is questionable. If not for the fact that DOS computers represent the dominant installed base of computers today, this multimedia standard might not be worth mentioning.



THE MPC PLATFORM

This is the second possible flavor of multimedia that might evolve from the MS-DOS world. Backed by a consortium of companies that includes Microsoft, Tandy Corporation, AT&T and a long list of other large companies, the MPC standard presents a clear suggested standard of what the MPC platform really is, and offers an upgrade path to the many DOS computer owners that have powerful 386 based computers or better.

The future of the MPC is more or less in the control of the Multimedia Marketing Council, a loose steering committee made up of marketing and administrative people representing the companies that have invested in the MPC standard. While they are now officially a part of the Software Publishers Association, the group seems to be heavily influenced by the powerful Microsoft Corporation. This gives the MPC standard additional clout as Microsoft has always been known to set the standards in worldwide personal computing.

A complete listing of the basic hardware and

"Backed by a consortium of companies...the MPC standard presents a clear suggested standard of what the MPC platform really is"

software needed to be MPC compatible is listed on the previous page. The difference between the hardware and software needed to be MPC compatible and the DOS multimedia standard is that MPC gives clear specifications for all add-ons (audio hardware, CD-ROM drive and CPU speed, etc.) and uses Microsoft Windows and multimedia extensions as a basic platform. If the loose knit DOS standard takes the place of MPC, users need only to install this operating system software to be DOS multimedia compatible. This means the *Windows for Multimedia* CD could then be used as a frisbee.



MACINTOSH MULTIMEDIA

Even hardcore MS-DOS owners grudgingly admit that the color Macintosh is a great machine. Mac owners enjoy outstanding graphics, great processing speed, and capable sound (even before you add on any of the large number of MIDI stereo output options). Macintosh owners also enjoy a high penetration of CD-ROM drives, mostly due to the high usage of the Mac as a desktop publishing machine and the volume of Mac type fonts and clip art available on CD.

The potential for Macintosh multimedia is incredible, and it could be said that the Macintosh

"The potential for Macintosh Multimedia is incredible, and it could almost be said that Macintosh is already a viable Multimedia standard"

is already a viable multimedia standard. A quick look at *MacWorld* or *MacUser* magazine will show that a few truly great multimedia products are already available on CD, and animation and MIDI development tools abound.

Currently, the only thing holding the Mac back from becoming a bigger multimedia platform is the lack of Mac computers in the home. Most industry analysts agree that home and education applications will do a lot to drive multimedia standards (some estimates show home and education accounting for more than 1/2 of the intended usage) and the Macs lag way behind MS-DOS in this area. The fact that most Macs are still black and white (especially in homes) only adds to the problem, the idea of black and white graphics as a multimedia standard is viewed somewhat skeptically.

In recent months, Apple has been very aggressive in slashing prices on their computer equipment and Macintosh machines like the LC and the Mac II are quickly entering homes. This could make Apple a real contender in the emerging multimedia marketplace.



CDTV & COMMODORE

The CDTV from Commodore has been commercially available for quite some time now, with very mixed results. Sales of the machine have not been strong enough to begin to call the CDTV a "standard" nor is it even a viable market for most major software publishers.

No one seems to know what to do with the machine, or who it is "for". Defenders of the machine say that it is just too far ahead of its time at the present time and that it will find its market as multimedia gets more consumer attention.

CDTV is, basically, an Amiga computer with a CD-ROM. The keyboard has been replaced by a cute little device that looks like a hybrid of a TV remote control and a video game controller. The CDTV has great graphics, and great sound (just like the Amiga). There are some really great video games and learning products for the machine (just like the Amiga) and the product has been, in most peoples' opinion, totally undermarketed (just like the Amiga).

CDTV could become a standard and have a strong initial presence in the marketplace. But a casual survey of Amiga owners leads to the opinion that since the software currently available for the CDTV is no better than the software for Amiga, plus most of it doesn't take advantage of the CDTV technology and storage.

"Defenders of the machine say that it is just too far ahead of its time ... it will find its market as multimedia gets more consumer attention."

Also, because the CDTV doesn't have a keyboard, the Amiga is actually a much better machine at this point. Maybe it's because the Amiga was always such a good machine in the first place, but it is the one entry into multimedia that doesn't seem to be as good as its current incarnation.



CDI FROM PHILLIPS

CDI is an astoundingly good technology. If you haven't done so already, find one of the more progressive consumer electronics chain stores and take a look at the CDI system from Philips.

A few years ago, the folks at Philips started shopping the CDI standard to selected software publishers through their American Interactive Media subsidiary. The promise of CD quality stereo sound, and true television quality graphics

"The current cost of the hardware, which is in the mid \$700 range, is simply too expensive for most interested consumers."

was a seductive one, and many thought CDI would take the market by storm on introduction. Presentations of the machine to developers featured impressive displays of the potential of the machine, and publishers saw many iterations of the hardware that were "almost right." Most software developers were hot to support CDI products when they first saw it, believing it would be the big future of interactive entertainment.

CDI was scheduled for release in Christmas 1990, and some say that they heard vague promises at one time that it should have been Christmas 1989. While the initial reception was very enthusiastic from publishers, the delays created a "wait and see" attitude from most developers that CDI will have to overcome if it is to survive. While Philips touts that it has 30+ software products ready to ship with the product on introduction, a review of the software really shows the lack of one clear application that will drive sales of the machine into homes.

Very early reports from retailers show mixed reaction to the machine - it's certainly not taking the market by storm - and everyone agrees that recession-plagued Christmas 1991 made for a lousy time to try to launch an expensive new

home technology. The current cost of the hardware, which is in the mid \$700 range at most retailers, is simply too expensive for most interested consumers, and it puts the machine in direct competition with less expensive personal computers like the Amiga and even low-end Macintoshes. Statements from Philips lead most to believe that prices will fall rapidly (which is pretty much the standard for most consumer electronics hardware) but many question whether those drops will end up being too little too late.

Philips has a strong history of introducing new technologies to the consumer marketplace. Audio, VHS, even audio cassettes came from the company. Philips also insists that it is taking a long term view when marketing CDI, and won't be discouraged nor retreat if early sales aren't up to expectation. Because the technology is an incredible consumer electronics break-through, and because Philips has an unprecedented track record for creating consumer electronics standards, it could be said that Philips has an inside track in the coming multimedia battle.

The rumored introduction of CDI machines from Sony and other manufacturers adds to this strong argument that Philips is the strong contender. But at this writing CDI is a hardware standard waiting to happen. Without software compelling enough to sell the machine it will not take off, and the software just isn't there yet.

Sierra On-Line plans to introduce the best selling King's Quest V on CDI sometime in 1992.



Continued on page 78



GETTING THE MOST OUT OF MULTIMEDIA:

Six New MPC Products Reviewed

By Stuart Moulder and Lorelei Shannon

Editor's Note: This is the first article in an ongoing series created to keep our readers informed on new software developments for multimedia.

The world of the MPC standard is a brand-new one. Exploring new territory is always fun and exciting, but it's easy to get lost in the tangle of new products bearing the MPC label. In the next several issues of *InterAction*, we would like to be your guide through this uncharted area. Of course, the path you take will ultimately be your decision. But a little light along the trail never hurt anyone!

For MPC hardware requirements, see page 52



Composer Quest. This multimedia introduction to music history has a lot of appeal as a product. The idea of being able to view a portrait of a composer, listen to a sample of his music, and find out about contemporary events and developments in visual art and world history is an ambitious and exciting one. We opened our review copy with high hopes.

The manufacturers suggest that you install *Composer Quest* on your hard drive. The program takes up an astonishing 16 megs of space. We just didn't have the room, so we opted not to do so. This slowed the program down considerably. It took a very long time to start up.

Once we had *Composer Quest* up and running, we discovered that it has a clear, concise timeline which acts as a guide through the program. The classical selection is very thorough, going from early Baroque through early Modern. The jazz selection is a little disappointing, as it ends at 1940, thereby missing Bebop, Cool, Fusion, and most of the other modern jazz forms the public is familiar with.

There are two or three selections of music per composer. The selections are appropriate and seem well thought out, although they are quite short. The samples are very clear and clean.

You have the option of investigating the art and history of any composer's time period. The information you receive is very basic and limited, but that is hardly surprising, considering the large number of composers included in the program. There is a rather nice feature involving the text, which is the option to click on underlined words and get more information about that word specifically. The text itself could have been much better written. It was often strangely subjective, and not very smooth.

Although we enjoyed exploring the list of composers, we discovered an irritating tendency in the program to jump around from place to place on its own. It would select something without our clicking on it, and would almost invariably scroll down too far in the text.

Most disappointing was our inability to get the game feature of the program to run. It

Six New MPC Products Reviewed

looked promising, but every time we started to play, we were promptly kicked back into DOS.

Conclusions: Overall, *Composer Quest* is an enjoyable and educational program. Anyone could benefit from it, from a student first learning about the world's great music, to an adult just wanting to expand his or her knowledge. One would hope that the "rough spots" will be smoothed out by the manufacturer soon. You might want to wait for a second run of this product.



THE ELECTRONIC LIBRARY OF ART

Copyright 1991, EBook, Inc.

Electronic Library of Art
EBook, Inc.
1009 Pecten Court
Milpitas, CA 95035

Electronic Library of Art. This illustrated art and humanities program started up much more quickly than *Composer Quest*. It contains an alphabetical, rather than a chronological index, and the list of artists is truly impressive.

Each artist has from one to six paintings that can be viewed. The paintings can be enlarged to fill the whole screen, and some have a "detail" feature which will blow up a section of the painting for closer examination.

The resolution on the painting images is excellent. The paintings layer, and you must close each one after you've opened it. This allows you to compare the works of several artists at once, or the different works of a single artist. The painting windows cascade, and you must center them yourself, but that hardly detracts from the program.

Each artist has a short biography, and each painting a very convenient "Data card" which lists the title of the work, the artist, the time period, where the painting is currently located, and other relevant information.

Conclusions: *The Electronic Library of Art* is a delightful product. It is fun and

easy to use, and is very educational and informative. It could easily be used for serious research as well as for recreation. EBook has announced that it will be releasing more volumes of the Library. This is definitely a series to look for.



Mediasource: General Topics is a series of images and audio libraries designed for use in presentations on the Multimedia PC. The box boasts 1,500 images, 60 minutes of music, and 30 minutes of sound effects. The program contains an easy-to-use search engine to help you find just the right thing for your presentation.

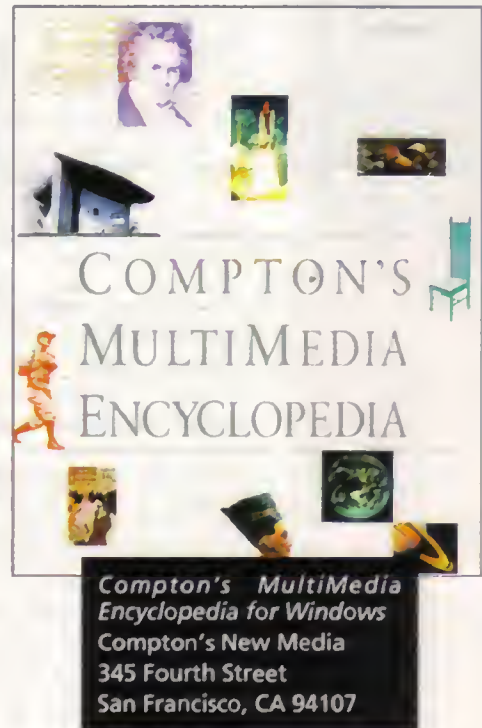
The visual library is fascinating. The images are incredibly varied. You could probably find most anything you needed for a multimedia presentation in *Mediasource*. The images are fun to watch, even if you aren't planning a presentation. In fact, they might be considered a good sourcebook for artists.

The music library is also varied, containing music for all kinds of moods and imagery. The sound effect library is both functional and fanciful, containing sounds ranging from animals to breaking glass to brushing teeth. When you're not busy preparing a presentation, your child could have a lot of fun investigating weird sounds.

The sound effect index is heavily cross-referenced. The good side to this is whether you're looking for a crash, a crunch, or a collision, you'll find it. On the other hand, it is slightly disappointing to discover that a crash, a crunch, and a collision are all the same thing.

Conclusions: *Mediasource* is a product that does exactly what it says it will. It appears to be enormously useful, as well as entertaining. Its possibilities seem endless. Applied Optical is

planning on releasing a second general topics volume, as well as military, historical, natural sciences, corporate and international disks, and more. They're worth watching for.



Compton's MultiMedia Encyclopedia, one of the first good CD-ROM products on the market, has gained a faithful following in the software community. Its reputation is a good one, and we were expecting only the best when we installed our copy. We weren't disappointed.

This is a massive, surprisingly deep program. The information you receive on any given subject is comparable, if not more, than what you would get from a traditional paper encyclopedia. It's not comprehensive, but it gives you the facts you'll need to learn more on the subject. Of course, Compton's has the added benefits of voice, music, and animation.

The Topic Tree, Compton's cross-referencing index, is an amazing accomplishment. It is easy to become lost in it, but even if you do, you're bound to find something that captures your attention along the way. For example, if you select "National Parks", you will discover not only national parks in the United States or even Canada, but parks from all over the world. The colorful images and descriptions are interesting enough that you'll be learning new things without even knowing it. Don't think that the *Topic Tree* is overly difficult or confusing,

Six New MPC Products Reviewed

NOTE: Call Crazy Nick at 800-326-6654 for the best price on these and other MPC titles.

however. With a little practice, you'll be skimming through the Tree like a pro.

The Atlas feature is a particularly nice one. You can focus on any geographic area in the world. This is important, as geography is not generally taught as often or as well in many schools as it should be. The easiness of using this feature will encourage students to explore.

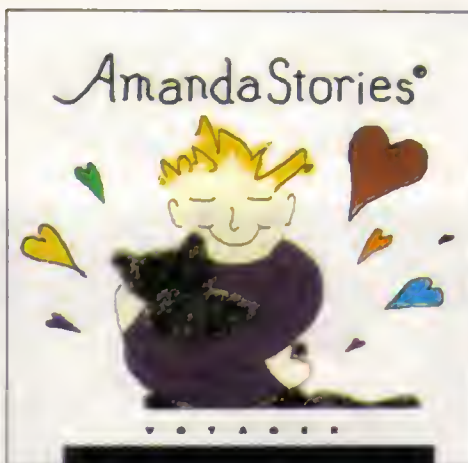
The audio samples are quite clear, though short. The speech is very understandable and well-chosen. Some of the musical selections seem a little bizarre. The Beethoven music sample, for instance, is a cut from the *Egmont Overture*. This is certainly not the piece with the widest recognition factor. Nonetheless, any music sample is better than none.

Compton's MultiMedia Encyclopedia contains 9 million words in 32,000 articles, 15,000 images, maps and graphs, 45 animation sequences (a heart pumping blood, a spider spinning a web, etc.), 5,000 charts and diagrams, a World Atlas, US History Timeline, and a complete online Webster's Intermediate Dictionary.

Conclusions: *Compton's MultiMedia Encyclopedia* is an excellent research tool for students, or anyone else who needs to know a little about a lot. The topics are enormously diverse and comprehensive. Just wandering through the *Topic Tree* is a fascinating and rewarding activity that people of all ages will enjoy. This is a friendly product, and will be a welcome addition to anyone's research library.

AmandaStories: Interactive Stories for Children. This collection of stories for very small children is charming in its simplicity. Using a no-typing, point-and-click interface, children guide *Inigo the Cat* and *Your Faithful Camel* through various situations.

In *Inigo takes a Bath*, for instance, the cat character runs its bathwater, washes its fur, and brushes its hair. Kids can cause Inigo to climb up on the dresser and look at himself, or use a tin of baby powder, or explore the drawers of his dresser. Whatever



AmandaStories: Interactive Stories for Children
The Voyager Company
1351 Pacific Coast Highway
Santa Monica, CA 90401

the child clicks on will precipitate some action, or the next scene.

A very nice feature of this product is the fact that children can't 'win' or 'lose'. In some of the stories, kids can control the sequence of events, or even the path of events, but the story always concludes happily. These really are interactive stories, rather than games.

The scenes are not fully animated. The still images fade, then change to other still images, like a comic book. We didn't find this detrimental, however. It seemed to add to the storytelling quality of the program. The art is simple and uncomplicated, allowing the child to fill in with his or her imagination.

Sound is not utilized particularly well. The cat character occasionally meows, for example, and his human owner says his name, but there is essentially no dialog. Music is used only briefly during transitions.

The only problem with this program is its incredible slowness. If you don't have room for it on your hard drive, it is almost unplayable. The transition time is so slow that children would simply lose interest.

Conclusions: This is a thoroughly charming exercise for very small children. It would certainly be a good way to introduce them to the personal computer. The straight Macintosh version runs quickly and cleanly. However, if you can't install multimedia *AmandaStories* on your

hard drive, it will probably be of no use to you. It just runs too slowly.

The Corel ArtShow '91. This is a collection of over 1,000 images created in CorelDRAW. All of the images are accessible using Corel's graphical interface, which allows you to search, display, then load the images directly into CorelDRAW.

There is a wide variety of images.



The Corel ArtShow '91
Corel Systems Corporation
1600 Carling Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1Z 8R7

850 of them were submitted in the second annual CorelDRAW International Design contest. The other 350 are from the ArtShow 90 for CD-ROM. There doesn't seem to be any reason to "recycle" these images. One would imagine that there is plenty of new work each year to fill the ArtShow.

The skill level of the work varies wildly. Some images are quite well done. Some others seem to be there only by virtue of their having been created in CorelDRAW.

The MIDI music files the program plays while displaying the artwork are innocuous, even bland. Corel certainly could have done better in that respect.

Conclusions: This is a good program to own if you are the least bit interested in CorelDRAW. The ability to load these images into CorelDRAW and experiment with them is fun and valuable to the budding artist. The contest itself is also an excellent opportunity for young talent. *Corel ArtShow '91* is an interesting, if not ultimately memorable product.



GREAT GAMES for OLDER COMPUTERS

Bit 'O My Heart

My husband laughs at it. He calls it a relic and a dinosaur. My mom asks after its health in the same tone of voice she reserves for my geriatric cat. My friend recently suggested converting it into a planter. It's my 1985 IBM PC.

I love it.

It's the computer I learned to love computers on. It taught me word processing. It made me throw out my typewriter. Its valiant little 8088 processor, noisy fan, and soft green glow have kept me company on many nights as we worked late at home. It has a name. No, I'm not telling you what it is.

It's also my playmate. We've wandered the magical land of Daventry, and cruised space together. We've been princes, kings, and janitors. We've piloted robot battlesuits, and we're getting ready to be dungeon delvers as soon as I get home.

Sierra has many excellent games that those of us with vintage machines can enjoy. They're not old. They're classics. Just like my computer, Hieronymous. Oops.

Amazing Adventures for Classic Computers

"I have an XT with a hard disk, and a Hercules Monochrome monitor. Which games can I play?"

King's Quest II: Romancing the Throne

Take a romantic and dangerous journey with King Graham as he searches for his true love. You'll need a keen eye, quick wit, and plenty of courage to fight the powers of evil and rescue the lovely Princess Valanice from captivity in the crystal tower. Find out if love really does conquer all!

This charming game is an excellent introduction to interactive gaming for children. It doesn't demand much memory, and will run smoothly on almost any XT machine.

King's Quest III: To Heir is Human

As young Gwydion, you've always known cruel treatment at the hands of your master, the evil wizard Mannanan. The time is right for your escape! You must outwit your wicked captor before he discovers your plans. Discover your true name, your true identity...and your true birthright.

This enjoyable adventure has even more interesting puzzles, fun situations and exciting characters than its predecessor. Like *KQ II*, it will run well for you.



By Lorelei Shannon

GREAT GAMES for OLDER COMPUTERS



Space Quest II: Vohaul's Revenge

OK, you and Roger Wilco saved Xenon and the whole galaxy. Now it's back to normal...except the dreadful Sludge Vohaul isn't dead, and he wants revenge! Can you stop him from releasing a ravaging horde of genetically engineered insurance salesmen on the universe?

This early entry in the humorous *Space Quest* series has wild adventures and silly sight gags galore. Like the early *King's Quest* games, it is perfect for XT computers.

Zeliard

Dungeon delving at its best! Battle your way through eight levels of mazes, swinging through jungles, slipping across ice caverns, and facing a host of merciless monsters. Along the way, discover hidden cities, learn spells, and talk to everyone you meet. This adventure is easy to get into...but will you ever come back?

Of all the games in this list, *Zeliard* looks the best on a CGA monitor. Its clean animation will be crystal-clear on your machine.

Righteous Role-Playing Action. *Zeliard* is a delightful dungeon adventure guaranteed to keep you on your toes.



"My XT has no hard disk. Which games will work for me?"
All of the above!

"I have a slow 286, and an EGA monitor. Which games will run quickly and smoothly for me?"

Hoyle Book of Games, Volumes I and II

Hoyle I offers 6 different card games you can play against amusing computer opponents with varying levels of skill. Even kids can learn to play *Crazy Eights* and *Old Maid*. Also included are *Gin Rummy*, *Hearts*, *Cribbage*, and *Klondike Solitaire*.

Hoyle II brings you 28 solitaire games for hours of fun. Play old favorites like *Canfield*, or try something exotic like *Beleaguered Castle*. There are even two games designed just for Sierra.

Hoyle I and *II* are exceptionally zippy and smooth on a 286. These are classic games that you'll never tire of—many people keep *Hoyle* games permanently on their drives!

Conquests of Camelot: The Search for the Grail

The kingdom is suffering from a soul sickness curable only by the Holy Grail. As King Arthur, you must find the most prized object in history, and the stakes are very high indeed. Months of research and inventive design went into this thrilling adventure.

An award-winning game, *Camelot* is the product of extensive research and innovative game design. It will run smoothly on your 286, and the graphics are beautiful.

Chivalry, Valor, and Faith. *Conquests of Camelot* is still one of Sierra's most popular games.



Police Quest 2: The Vengeance

Jessie Bains, the Death Angel, has escaped from prison. Armed and dangerous, he's out to get even with you for putting him away. You're smarter this time, more experienced and tough. But so is he, and he's holding a grudge.

Authentic police procedure is used in this exciting installment of the popular series. This game runs fast, and you'll have to think fast.

Codename: Iceman

A U.S. ambassador has been kidnapped by terrorists. The world stands at the brink of war. The situation could become explosive at any moment. The world's only hope? You. Agent Johnny Westland. This exciting game features authentic U.S. Naval intelligence charts, and a 3-D submarine simulator.

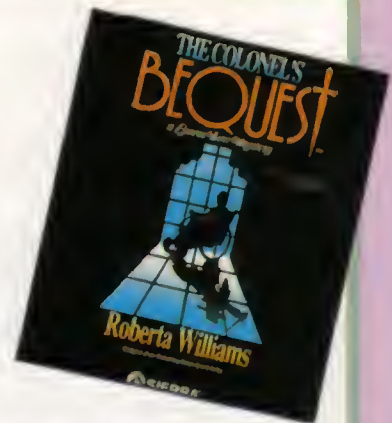
For a change of pace, try this Sierra techno-thriller. *Iceman* is fun, and will run well on your computer.

Leisure Suit Larry 2 and 3

In *Larry 2*, how are you going to escape the spy-infested jungle? How are you going to evade the clutches of the evil Doctor Nonookie? How are you going to explain that cross-dressing incident? It's a torrid tropical adventure! In *Larry 3*, you'll begin the game as Larry, out looking for a cure for your broken heart. In the middle of the game, you'll become Patti! Rescue Larry from a fate worse than death at the hands of amazon cannibals women? Find out in this silly, sexy, romp.

The two middle entries in the *Larry* series feature wild, witty puzzles, hysterically funny situations, and high-resolution 16 color graphics. Adults will love these games.

GREAT GAMES for OLDER COMPUTERS



King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella

King Graham has fallen mortally ill, and only you, the princess Rosella, can save him. You must journey far from home, in search of the magic that can restore your beloved father to health. Explore islands, castles, caves, and magic forests along the way.

Sierra's first adventure starring a female character was a massive hit. Its fine soundtrack, high-resolution graphics, and challenging puzzles make for an excellent game.

Magic and Adventure.
King's Quest IV is
an exciting and
enchanting experience.



Quest for Glory I

You're a brand-new graduate of the Famous Adventurer's Correspondence School, and you're about to set out on your first quest. If you can rescue the son and daughter of a powerful Baron from an evil witch, you just might become a real Hero. But beware: the road to glory is full of surprises!

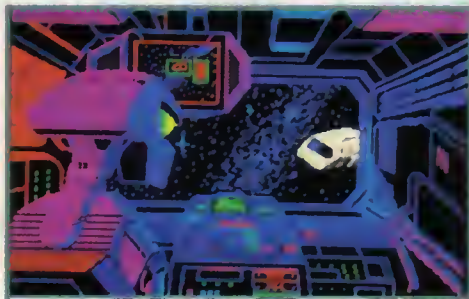
Quest for Glory I has exceptional EGA graphics. They've been utilized to their best advantage, and you won't believe the results.

Space Quest III: The Pirates of Pestulon

Help! The Two Guys from Andromeda, designers of the Space Quest series, have been kidnapped! You and Roger must save them from the diabolical Scumsoft, before they're forced to sell out and start making second-rate cartridge arcade games.

This space romp won awards for its fantastic, logical puzzles, loopy humor, and excellent soundtrack. *SQ III* will cruise fast and smoothly through your drive.

Silliness in Space.
Space Quest III is
full of belly laughs,
bad puns, and wild
adventure.



The Colonel's Bequest

As young college student Laura Bow, you'll get more than you bargained for at the isolated Bayou plantation of Colonel Dijon. Now you must sift through a suspicious cast of characters in search of a killer. But are you next on the murderer's list?

This excellent game is challenging for adults, yet playable for children. The graphics in Sierra's first mystery game are atmospheric, fun, and exciting.

Sorcerian

Create and train your own characters, then choose from 15 different role-playing adventures to send them on. This is an amazing universe of fantasy and reality, where characters actually grow older as the game progresses.

Sorcerian has excellent EGA graphics. Like *Zeliard*, the streamlined simplicity of the art and animation makes *Sorcerian* one of the visually finest EGA games around.

Plus—everything on the XT list!

"Okay, we know, we just gave you a lot of information. Here's a simple list to help you sort it out."

XT with or without a hard drive, with a CGA or Monochrome monitor.

King's Quest II

Manhunter II

King's Quest III

Space Quest II

Manhunter I

Thexder

286 with a CGA, Monochrome, or EGA monitor

Conquests of Camelot

Manhunter I

Codename: Iceman

Manhunter II

Colonel's Bequest

Oil's Well - 1.2 meg 5.25

Gold Rush!

Police Quest 2

Hoyle Volume I

Quest for Glory I

Hoyle Volume II

Silpheed

King's Quest II

Sorcerian - EGA/VGA only

King's Quest III

Space Quest II

King's Quest IV

Space Quest III

Leisure Suit Larry 2

Thexder

Leisure Suit Larry 3

Fire Hawk - No CGA or mono support

NOTE: If you turn down the Animation Detail on your game, it will speed up the action!

DID YOU KNOW: That you can upgrade your CGA monitor to 16 color graphics with an EGA video card for around \$50.00? The resolution is not quite as good as an EGA monitor's, but it's a lot cheaper. Hard disk required.

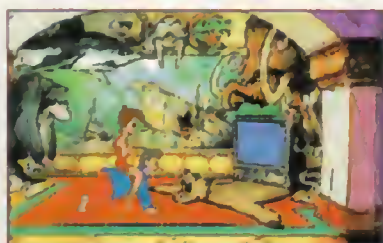
All these titles are available at a software dealer near you.

"Dynamix may be the one software company to finally achieve interactive films..."

It's the closest thing yet to capturing the quality and feel of animated movies... *Willy Beamish* is not only fun to play but also beautiful to watch and hear... The game and story are engaging. Characters display depth and real personality, and the puzzles are fun to solve. This Dynamix game is a classic ... one of the best animated cartoon-style adventure games ever produced...

A must-quest addition to any collection... it's a real winner."

QuestBusters™
December 1991



Think how great cartoons could be if someone as *twisted* as you could call the shots...



...They'd be full of the kinda well-developed characters you've always wanted to watch...



...And the high-quality, wholesome cartoon violence your mother said would rot your brains right out...



...And so much great art and animation you'd stare at the screen till you went blind...



...Plus music that'll bruise your eardrums. Which is why we aren't embarrassed to say...



...When it comes to Willy, "Nothing is weirder than he but thee". Or something.



A cynical Saturday morning cartoon for slightly twisted adults.
And totally Warped Kids!

Suggested price: \$59.95 • Visit your favorite software store or order by calling 1-800-326-6654 outside U.S. (209) 683-4468

Dynamix
PART OF THE GIGAWATT FAMILY

Classic Action

*Seven computer gaming professionals
pick the absolute essentials for every
game collection.*

by Kurt Busch

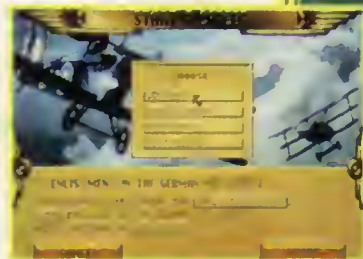
What makes a classic?

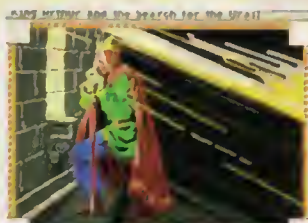
It's a tricky subject to get a handle on, but we tried anyway.

We asked seven computer game professionals - people, who design, produce, and sell these games for a living - to come up with the titles they would recommend as essential to any serious game collection. Then we made it a little tougher. We limited their choices to one apiece. (Actually, one of the people we asked cheated and picked two, but we bowed to his superior game knowledge and corporate rank).

The responses were varied, demonstrating that everyone has a different idea of what makes a truly great game. But the enthusiasm for the products reviewed was uniformly high.

(Continued next page)





Conquests of Camelot: Emotion and intellectual challenge in one masterfully produced package.

Conquests of Camelot

by Josh Mandel
Director of Product Design

Most computer games do well enough to entertain and challenge. To me, an ideal adventure game goes much further: it doesn't just entertain, it touches. Like any great work of fiction, a great adventure evokes awe, laughter, anger, hate, surprise, love, and joy. Of the hundreds of games I've played, only two have made me laugh out loud at clever puns, made me shout with triumph upon solving devious puzzles, and left me with a lump in my throat. One is Steve Meretzky's brilliant text adventure *Planetfall*. The other is Christy Marx's exquisitely crafted *Conquests of Camelot*.

Not only does *Camelot* go beyond entertainment for me, it also goes beyond challenge. I want puzzles that tease, that go from easy to agonizing and back again. I don't want all "inventory puzzles"...you know, where you give this item to that person and get a new item in return. Give me logic puzzles, interlocking puzzles, riddles, mazes, codes, tests. Keep me on my toes; make me think I'm shrewd, then make me wonder how I graduated elementary school. And when it's over, I want to be proud for out-thinking the designer, and I want to know that every puzzle was fair. *Camelot's* variety of puzzles fits this profile perfectly. It stretches my ability to reason and imagine.

Consider the Jerusalem Bazaar scene. This is absolutely the most satisfying sequence I've played in any Sierra game. The puzzles are subtle and require the player to pay close attention to what the characters say and what's visible onscreen. They differ in difficulty and they're interlocked, so you have to deduce the correct order in which to solve them. Each puzzle has its own story, some of which are comical and some of which are touching. And the animation is incredible. We're doing things now with rotoscoping, which makes for very realistic movement, but the animation in *Camelot*, even without rotoscoping, is superrealistic. Watch the gestures that characters make as they speak, watch how the wise man draws in the sand. Elegant animation that couldn't possibly be more effective than it is.

Christy Marx also researches her games exhaustively, and pays intense attention to detail. When the game's over, you realize that you've learned a great deal about the period: the religions, the economics, the legends. Some games are delicious; this one's nourishing, too.

So what's to add? Christy's married and I'm spoken for, so I'll just have to content myself with playing her marvelous computer games.



King's Quest I and II

by John Williams
Vice President of Marketing

I've been playing Roberta Williams' games for as long as she's been making them. I first experienced computer gaming through her very early work like *Mystery House* and *Wizard and the Princess* so I sort of grew up on her style of adventure game design. She has a clean and crisp style of design that states the goals of the game clearly and makes your challenges clear, which I find very refreshing. And, of course, Roberta's my sister-in-law, so some would say that my opinion comes with a natural prejudice.

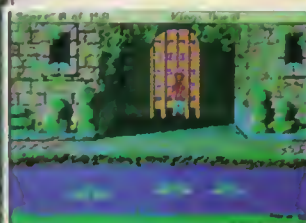
All jokes about family favoritism aside, I really do think that *King's Quest I* was the finest computer game ever written, and the most fun to play. (Honest!) I also liked *King's Quest II* a lot. I think that both these games are great examples of the kinds of adventure games that I like to play and that started the whole adventure game following in the first place.

King's Quest I and *II* are unlike most computer games written nowadays. Frankly, they don't feature the deep, complex plots of games like *Police Quest III* and *Conquests of the Longbow* and don't have the well-developed characters. Instead, these games are basically treasure hunts with lots of fun puzzles thrown in to add challenge. They feature simple goals - you know what it takes to win the contest with the computer.

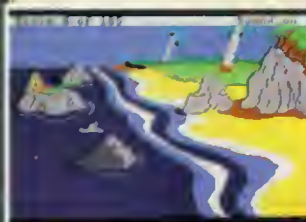
For me, adventure games have always represented a pleasant diversion - something that I could boot up and get lost in for a few hours at the end of a long day. I view them the way some people view a Rubik's Cube or a crossword puzzle. I want simple goals - something I can jump right into the middle of and go - even if I haven't sat down with

the game in weeks and have completely forgotten what went on in the in the last play session. I want hard puzzles - real mind benders - so that when I solve one I can sit smugly at the computer with a sense of satisfaction. This straightforward "goals and puzzles" approach to adventuring represents the oldest and purest approach to the artform.

Everyone at Sierra has their own opinion about how adventure games should work, of course, but as for me, give me that old time adventuring. Give me the early *King's Quests*.



King's Quest I (above) and II (below): Good old-fashioned treasure hunts.



Quest for Glory I: So You Want to be a Hero?

by Guruka Singh
Senior Producer



There are certain adventure games that have left a more lasting impression on me than others. Of all the text adventure games I've played (and there have been many), Brian Moriarty's *Trinity* was an unforgettable experience with the most depth of feeling and meaning I've ever found in any text adventure.

It's harder in some ways to create a world in a graphic adventure since you don't get to use your imagination as much as you do with a text adventure or with a book. Certain lands (such as Daventry in the *King's Quest* games) are able to take on a life of their own and exist in one's mind as if they were real places, beyond the games themselves. Another world that comes to life for me in this way is "Spielburg" in the game *Quest for Glory I - So You Want to be a Hero* — which was actually titled *Hero's Quest* when it was released in 1989.

Up until *So You Want to be a Hero*, Sierra had never done a role-playing game in which you have a choice of character types to play. The basic concept behind role-playing games, that you must think and act AS YOUR CHARACTER WOULD ACT in any situation, adds a wonderful new dimension to adventure game play! In *So You Want to be a Hero* you can play as a Fighter, a Magician or a Thief. Each character has different skills and different strengths and weaknesses. The fighter is brash, strong, direct and confident. The magician is intelligent, able to solve problems indirectly by his wits; and the thief is crafty, stealthy, cautious and clever.

When Lori and Corey Cole came to us with the idea of doing a role-playing game for Sierra, we wondered if our adventure game players would accept and enjoy a role-playing game from a company that was known for adventure games. "So You Want to be a Hero" ended up not as a traditional role-playing game, but as a funny and fun adventure game with some role-playing elements (configurable player statistics and skills).

Spielberg is a baroque Tyrolean cuckoo-clock world of zany characters (like the bad-pun-loving wizard Erasmus who reminds me a lot of Corey).

Above all, I love *So You Want to be a Hero* because of it's wonderful humor, clever puzzles (which must be solved differently depending on what character type you are playing!) and the charming world of Spielberg itself which has a life all its own. "So You Want to be a Hero" is a rare thing... an adventure game that can played over and over again as each character type. Each time you play it you find new things you didn't see the first time around.



Quest for Glory I - So You Want to be a Hero:
Fantasy role-playing for adventure gamers.



Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards

by Kurt Busch
Editor, *InterAction Magazine*

Like a lot of other people I know, my introduction to adventure games came via *Lost Wages*, the seamy stomping grounds of the most curious cult hero of the computer age, *Leisure Suit Larry*. *Larry 1* was my first experience with Sierra's style of graphic storytelling. And it's still my favorite.

Larry 1 is a very round game. You can go practically anywhere in the first several minutes of gameplay (and return to almost any location as often as you like). The trick is not linking a series of linear story events together so much as collecting a series of objects and using them to overcome obstacles. Thanks to Al Lowe's warped sense of humor, putting these pieces together is as rib-tickling as it is revealing.

The puzzles are - in a twisted sort of way - logical and, thus, very satisfying. I played this one through without a hintbook (though I later found out I missed quite a bit) and only one clue from a friend. The puzzles strike a great balance: tough enough to challenge but fair enough to let you play with your head instead of your hintbook.

Sierra gave *Larry 1* a whole new look in 1991, but - thankfully - kept the storyline, jokes, and overall approach the same. The new VGA

graphics, whacked-out animation, and sound support make *Larry 1* the rarest of all creatures: a contemporary classic on the cutting edge of the artform.

Larry 1 is the game I give friends who've never played an adventure game. While many of these friends grumble about not having the time to finish a long game, everybody I know hangs in until the end, chuckling through every smirky puzzle in the story.

Many games have great introductions, dazzling animation, and sensational soundtracks. *Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards* has all of these, plus the most important thing you can put into any game: a ton of fun.



The new and improved Leisure Suit Larry. A contemporary classic on the cutting edge of technology.



Red Baron

by Stuart Moulder
Producer

Dynamix's *Red Baron* set a new standard for computer flight simulations nearly a year ago when it was released. In my opinion, no subsequent flight simulator has exceeded that standard. At least not until Dynamix releases its next flight simulator, *Aces of the Pacific*.

Red Baron is a breakthrough product in several important ways. First, it contains some of the most meticulously accurate flight models found in any PC flight simulator. Each individual make of aircraft has unique flight characteristics faithfully based on their historic performance. The torque effect of the Sopwith Camel's rotary engine is modeled as one example. All planes lose energy while turning, a subtle but critical aspect of flight that dramatically effects air combat tactics. I could go on and on lavishing praise on the flight models. Suffice it say that if you fly a plane in *Red Baron*, you can't get a more accurate feeling for that plane unless you fly the real thing.

Beyond the flight model, *Red Baron* offers an incredibly detailed simulation. Every conceivable aspect of air combat is modeled. For the first time, the impact of flying out of the sun (or into it) is modeled. Injured pilots experience hazy and blurred vision and may even lapse into unconsciousness. Enemy bullets can rupture a oil and fuel lines. Machine guns can jam and are unjammed with a hammer, just as in real combat. Best of all, these and many other details are optional. The player can tailor *Red Baron* to his own tastes.

Red Baron is more than a set of planes and abstract missions, it is a simulator about the aircraft and pilots of the Western Front during the Great War. A career mode is available in which players create a character whose fate they control throughout the war. The entire Western Front is modeled and period maps are provided for players to use as navigational



A host of WWI aces await you in the dangerous dogfights of Red Baron.



aids while flying missions. As the war progresses, newer more powerful planes become available, just as they did historically. The player's performance will also dictate his assignments and the quality of the planes that he may fly.

Red Baron also features the most versatile replay function of any game on the market. The Mission Playback function replays any mission exactly the way it was flown. Players may view the replay from any angle or perspective, allowing them to review their performance for future missions. Players may also enter the mission at any point and play it again from that point onward in order to improve their results. Or players may choose to use the playback function to create their own films of their best missions.

Finally, there is the documentation. The *Red Baron* manual is a beautiful work of art crammed with fascinating historical background and tactical advice. Period photos illustrate the text and detailed color plates of each plane are included. An equivalent book could well cost nearly as much as the entire game.

If you haven't taken a Sopwith Camel out to tangle with the *Red Baron*, you owe it to yourself to strap in and fly into the skies of Western Europe.



A wide variety of historically accurate missions keeps the career of an ariel ace fresh and exhilarating.

The Colonel's Bequest

by Jane Jensen
Game Designer

When I think about recommending a game to someone, I think primarily about the way the game made me feel. I've bought a lot of games in the past year or so that looked like fabulous products; great VGA game art, a great looking cover, Roland and Soundblaster support, an interesting story premise, etc. Unfortunately, all too often when I get home and boot up the 8 Meg. monster, I find myself losing interest after the first

ten minutes or so. When a game player sees products like this, it's easy to believe that the death of the computer game industry is imminent. How is it possible that products this elaborate can make you feel so bored? Are we getting jaded? Has everything already been done?

I, for one, still believe in the computer gaming industry - at least if we can remember what makes a game truly great. What makes a game great is the feeling behind the product; the warmth of the story, the depth and realism of the characters, the make-you-mad-to-solve-it nature of the puzzles, and the tickle-you, touch-you dialogue and text. In other words, charm.

In my opinion, no one is better at charm than Roberta Williams. The first game I ever played was *King's Quest IV* and I've been hooked on gaming ever since. If I bought another hundred of those \$60.00 disappointments I still

King's Quest III

by Gano Haine
Game Designer

Ideally an adventure game provides a series of delights as the player explores and solves its puzzles. It's like the crepe paper surprise balls we used to buy as kids. A beautiful, wounded head of a prince, a king, an evil wizard is unraveled slowly. Along the way, we find a trinket or two hidden in the folds of the streamers. At the end we fall into a treasure trove of children's baubles.

Of all the early games I've played, the game that gives me this experience in its most perfect form is *King's Quest III: To Heir is Human*. The care and attention in its crafting, its classic fairy tale plot of hidden identity and servitude to an evil wizard is gripping. As Gwydion, I awaken in the kingdom of Llewlor to a life of slavery. The demands of an evil wizard are so petty and continual that I seldom have a chance to sleep in my mean little bedroom (hmmm, what about those dishes and that laundry that I left on the stairs so I could play this game). How I struggle to escape the evil Manannan! But he appears when I least expect it and plunders all my magical booty. I discover his secret spells and am too much for him. Soon he is history! After all anyone who eats a cookie with hairs sticking out, however well-disguised, deserves what he gets.

And then I am on my way to discover my identity and perform deeds of greatness (the dishes, the laundry can wait - after all, I'm saving the world). Oh what bliss, after endless trudging through the game world in games past, to have a magic map! Point, click, be there!

We see a new generation of royalty emerge here: Gwydion/Alexander and Rosella, the twins of Graham and Valance. The universe of Davenry expands, brimming with new possibilities. An old wrong is righted. The beauty and simplicity of the fairy tale world are restored once more. And, of course, we insatiable KQ fans are ready for *King's Quest IV*. Right away.

wouldn't give up just on the hope that the next one would be a charmer.

Of all of Roberta's games, my favorite is *Colonel's Bequest*. I've always been a big fan of 'British cozies'

- mysteries of the Miss Marple variety. The atmosphere of *Colonel's Bequest* is British cozy at it's best, with wonderful mystery-classic characters like the old Colonel himself, Jeeves the butler, Celie the voodoo cook, and Gloria Swansong, the Hollywood actress. It took me a while to get the hang of the act structure of the game, but once I did, I had a blast making sure I'd seen every story element in each act. I even made up a spreadsheet on my word processor so that I could fill in everything that was happening and when. The dialogue and characterizations were some of the best Roberta's ever done, and the puzzles were

intriguing too; the clock in the hall, the bell tower, the fountain statue, the parrot - all fun, fun stuff. And, of course, I loved finding all the dead bodies.

There was a real gothic tension in *Colonel's Bequest* and the art and animation really suited it well. It's tough to give a computer sprite an on-screen personality, but all of the characters in *Colonel's Bequest* had a very distinctive look and feel in their movements, expressions, and reactions. The house and the grounds were also very atmospheric, especially at night.

In short, I think *Colonel's Bequest* is an absolute gem. I'm not the sort of person who likes to see movies more than once or read a book more than once, even if I like it a lot. *Colonel's Bequest* is the only computer game I've ever played over and over. In fact, just talking about it makes me want to go play it right now!



THE SIERRA NETWORK

by Vince Geraci

Interactive
Flight
Simulation

I'LL GET YOU RED BARON

And you will. It's the hottest, new Sierra Network interactive game. You and up to 3 other players can throttle back your World War I planes and take to the skies. Wait till you feel the thrill of diving down on your opponent. Or go head to head in true flight simulator combat. You'll be dogfighting with real players from the Network not against a computer. And, your opponent might live on the other side of the country. It's unprecedented in gaming history!

The amazing 3-space perspective allows you to look left, right, and behind your plane. You can even view the entire battle from outside your plane. If you have a sound module you won't believe how good the sound effects are.



Get On-Line!
1-800-Sierra-1

You'll dogfight your Network friends with the new interactive Red Baron flight simulator. The 3-space perspective will keep you on the edge of your keyboard.

Where People
Meet People
to Have Fun

Network Special Delivery Goes On Line

Now there's a way you can send mail to your friends and they'll receive it instantaneously. The Sierra Network has unveiled the slickest electronic mail service in the industry. You can write letters to your Network friends at anytime of the day or night and when they log on, your letter will be waiting for them.

Each letter you write is enclosed in its own envelope (for privacy) and it's postmarked with the date and time it was sent, including its return address.

Let's face it, The Sierra Network Bulletin Board is great for broadcasting news to everyone. But when you want to leave a special friend a special note, it's great to know only he or she will read it.

It's the perfect way to send birthday greetings, holiday wishes and love letters (sigh). You can send invitations to your friends and all meet in the new *Chat Rooms* for a Friday night get together.

The new *Mail Service* and *Chat Rooms* are ideal for cross country players.

The Sierra Network Mail Service allows true Chess enthusiasts to send each other Chess moves through the Network Mail Service. No matter which time zone you live in, you can carry on a game any time of day. People have played Chess through the mail for years. It was just never this easy.

The Chat Rooms have already been receiving their share of use. It's a great way for a group of people to get together and exchange computers' hardware and software information.

Once a group gathers in A *Chat Room* they can exchange conversation just as if they are sitting in someone's living room. You can select any individual in the *Chat Room*, click on his or her name and whisper a personal aside to them that no one else can hear. It's so cool, you'll love it.

The Sierra Network Population Explosion

The Sierra Network has got the Welcome Wagon on a roll. New neighbors are signing up (moving in) at a phenomenal pace. And they're signing up all over the country.

They love to chat with one another on the Network while they play *Bridge*, *Chess*, *Cribbage*, *Hearts*, *Checkers*, *Backgammon* and *Mini Golf* (it's hard to say if they'll find time to talk while playing the new *Red Baron* game).

The Sierra Network allows people to create their own face and personality profile so everyone feels right at home as soon as they get on the system.

Plus, it's so easy to use everyone from grandmas to grandkids can play on the Sierra Network without any previous computer training.

INTERACTION Magazine

NETWORK MINI GOLF LINKS YOU TO THE LINKS

What to do on a Saturday night? A lot of us find ourselves asking this. Now we can get together with friends and play a round of golf. It's a good, clean, fun (and cheap) date for those special Network couples.

Mini Golf on The Sierra Network links players together from any part of the country just so the can putter around. Already this new game has launched tournaments and challenges.

Each hole has a different layout, obstacle or 'secret'. Some randomly change with each game. Players aim shots and control the degree of force use to shoot the ball. The computer keeps score on a realistic score card.

One of the holes features a clown with revolving teeth. It's no easy putt to make it through the hole in his bridgework. When you do, your ball slides out a chute on the other side of the green. It's just like the real thing.

Right now Mini Golf has 9 holes but 18 hole golf is coming soon. Of course, players can chat, give tips, joke around and laugh with each other as if they were right on a real course.

NEWS ON THE NETWORK

The Sierra Network Events Update

"I've never had so many friends from so many different places in my life," observed a new Sierra Network Member.

And he was so right. It's not just locals who are getting together for weekend parties and outings. Some folks are traveling hundreds of miles to get together with their Network friends.

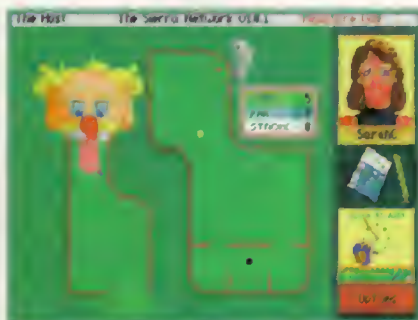
For example, a recent outing to Knott's Berry Farm Amusement Park in Buena Park, California drew fun seekers from all over California. Some drove down from as far away as San Francisco:

In fact, one woman changed her Sierra Network persona from Susie to Squishy because she got drenched on one of the water rides.

The Hayward picnic was a complete success. It's so much fun when people get together and see their Network friends in person. It's so different because you get to know a person by their personality first. The Sierra Network has made it possible for hundreds of people to get to know each other and become friends.

And clubs are getting very popular on The Sierra Network. Just to mention a few, there are postings on the Bulletin Board for a Star Trek club, a comic book club and a sports card collectors club.

Friends, Food and Fun!



Each Mini Golf hole has a different layout and challenge. Putt the ball through the clown's teeth and it ends up on the green. It's not as easy as it looks.



Get past the cat's wagging tail and try to get your ball into the moving mouse hole. Up to four players can get together for a round of golf.



Network friends play Mini Golf on their computers. And they team up to play the real thing.



Network friends had a great time at Knott's Berry Farm amusement park and at the gamers picnic in Hayward. A simple invitation on The Sierra Network Bulletin Board brought people together from all points in California.

More To Come

The Sierra Network is changing and growing everyday. There are fantastic new games and features on the way.

Stellar 7 is in the works. Imagine how much more intense this high-tech, high stakes, alien action game will become when real interactive multi-players battle each other.

SierraLand will be open soon! Have you ever been to a state or county fair, or to Disneyland? You, your computer and your friends will have more thrills than you ever thought possible on a computer monitor screen. So, send an invitation to your favorite date on Network Mail.

You'll go White Water Rafting, play Mini Golf (18 holes), have a blast in the Arcade and...get ready sharp shooters because when SierraLand opens, there will be one phrase that says it all, **Paint Ball**.

Groups of friends can get together and form two teams. You can hide behind rocks, walls and bushes...but watch out if you get shot SPLAT! and you're out.

Larryland is on the drawing board. This far-out park will have a parental discretion admission but everyone's invited. You'll play games like Poker and Blackjack in the **Casino**, or maybe you'll prefer to just hang-out at **Lefty's**. If you know Larry, you know it's going to be a party-land.

Keep watching this INTERAction magazine feature article for the latest news about The Sierra Network. Now you can be part of the world's friendliest, most fun and exciting, and 'gamingest' electronic network, **special delivery**.

CARTOON CONTEST

1. Andy Kohler, age 14, Pennsylvania
2. Robert Broytman, Israel
3. Phil Flickinger, age 17, Pennsylvania
4. Bob Miller, age 16, California
5. Wesley Martin, age 13, Illinois
6. Paul Hitchcock, age 11, Washington
7. Henry Salvadore, New Jersey

Sierra's Cartoon and Drawing Contest is an ongoing competition, and always open to submissions. Winning entries will be published in *InterAction*, and winners will receive a Sierra software product of their choice. Because we receive hundreds of submissions every month, we cannot acknowledge non-winning entries. Large entries may be reduced for space considerations when printed.

If you are a winner we will contact you to find out which software product you want for your prize, so remember to include your telephone number. If you are under 18, please include your age

RULES:

Cartoons and drawings must be original ideas, not copies of other cartoons or drawings. To be considered for the contest, entries must be in black ink on unlined white paper (please do not fold).

Your name, address and telephone number must appear on the back of your entry or on a separate piece of paper attached to your entry.

Enter as often as you like. It is not necessary to send multiple entries in separate envelopes.

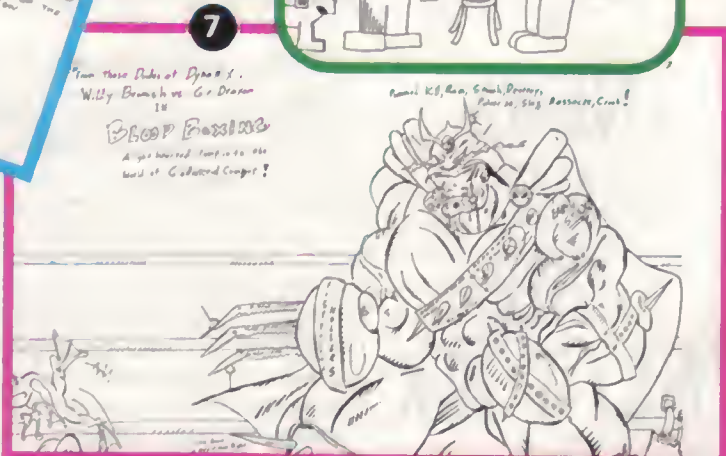
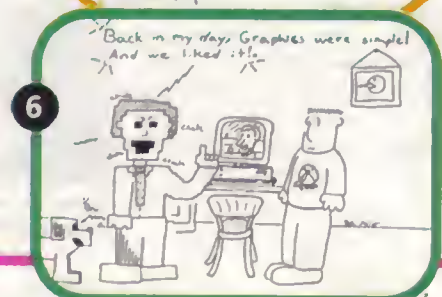
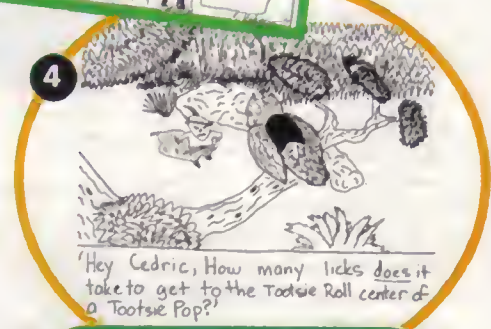
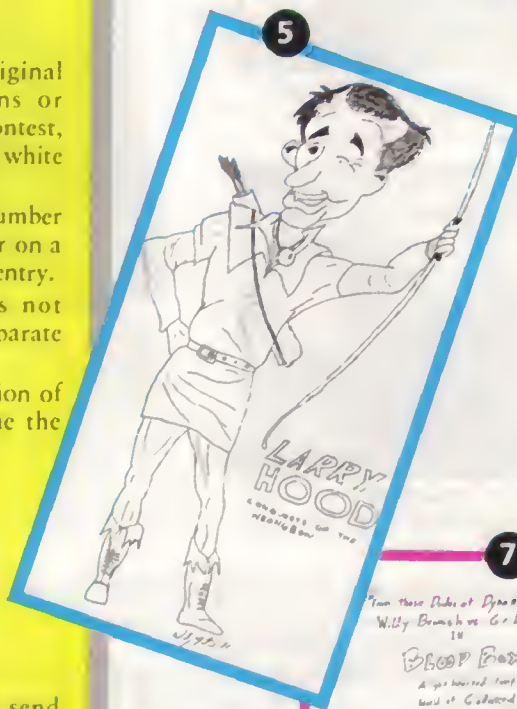
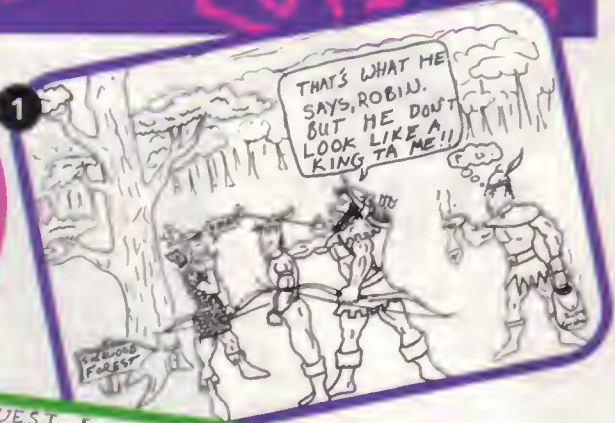
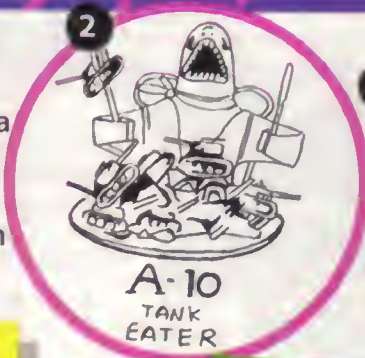
Winners are chosen at the sole discretion of Sierra On-Line, and all entries become the property of Sierra On-Line.

Submit cartoon/drawing entries to:

Cartoon Contest
Sierra On-Line
P.O. Box 1103
Oakhurst, CA 93644

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please do not send any other correspondence in the same envelope as your cartoon contest entry. Address all other correspondence to:

Sierra On-Line
P.O. Box 485
Coarsegold, CA 93614



LAURA BOW'S MYSTERIOUS MESSAGE CONTEST

Below is an inscription found in a secret room of the Temple of Amon Ra in the valley of the Kings, where the priceless Dagger of Amon Ra was discovered.

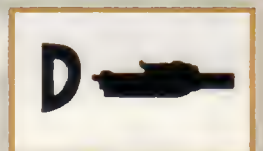
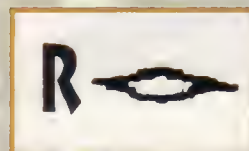
We suspect that this inscription may have some bearing on the case. We have successfully translated four of the glyphs, which are shown at the bottom of the page. Your assignment, Ms. Bow, is to translate the rest of this inscription, and send in your findings immediately. The Dagger must be returned!

When you've translated the inscription, send it to Sierra On-Line. Entries must be postmarked no later than May 15, 1992. Please include your name, address, and telephone number with your entry.

The first ten randomly drawn correct entries will be winners. Each winner will receive the free Sierra software product of his or her choice. Winners are chosen at the sole discretion of Sierra On-Line. All entries become the property of Sierra On-Line. Void where prohibited by law.



Send Completed entries to:
Laura Bow II Contest
Sierra On-Line
P. O. Box 1103
Oakhurst, CA 93644



SIERRA presents...

LARRY

LOUNGE
LIZARD
CONTEST
WINNERS

...and a very lizardly lot they are, too!
CONGRATULATIONS, crepuscular princes of polyester!



MICHAEL POCCIA, NEW YORK

"Poor Larry doesn't stand a chance with Master Lizard Michael Poccio around!"



MARK BOITEAU, CANADA

"This cool dude is Mark Boiteau, alias Larry Jr.: The New Generation."



DR. DEAN BAUGH/DR. CHRIS McCONNELL, COLO.

"Are we seeing double? NO! Dr. Dean Baugh and Dr. Chris McConnell are two lizards of a feather. (Or is that scale?)"

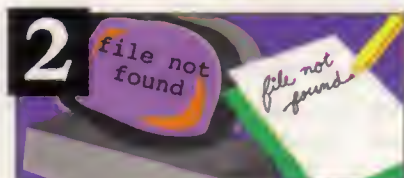


CUSTOMER SERVICE

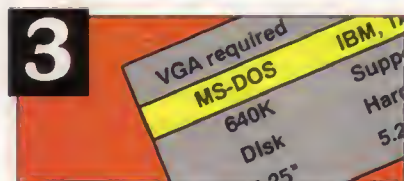
For faster, more efficient service, here are a few things you should have ready when you call. This will help you get the proper answer on your first call and save you time and money.



1. Know the type of computer you own. Consult your owner's manual, labels on the back of your computer, or your sales invoice. It is very important that Sierra's representatives know what type of computer you own.



2. Try to be as specific as possible. Read the error message on your screen and write it down if necessary. The trained customer service people at Sierra are trained to handle most computer problems, but they'll need to know exactly what's not working in order to help you.



3. Always check the label on your game box. Make sure it is compatible with your computer equipment. Many times people receive games as gifts from friends who don't know if the game's system requirements match the computer of the person receiving the gift. If this happens to you, no problem. If the dealer it was purchased from does not have the type of game for your computer, send it directly to Sierra On-Line with your computer specifications and they'll send you a replacement, for a small (\$0-\$5) handling fee.



4. Have the phone near your computer. This way the representative can 'lead' you through solving your problem. If you can't bring the phone near your computer, take notes.



5. **CUSTOMER SERVICE WILL NOT GIVE OUT ANY GAME HINTS OVER THE PHONE.** Sorry, but this is the only way Customer Service can offer efficient support for all its customers. See next page for more information on how to get hints.

**Sierra On-Line's Customer Service Extends
Its Hours to Serve the Entire Nation**

1-209-683-8989

Customer Service's new hours until March 31, 1992 will be:
Monday - Friday 8 am to 9 pm PST • Saturday 8 am to 5 pm PST



Write on to Sierra Service...



The best customer service in the industry... "You don't just buy our games, you buy the support of the whole company."

Sierra On-Line is dedicated to helping their customers with each and every question or problem. Whether it's memory shortages, software compatibility, or any other issue that has to do with their products, Sierra will go to any length to solve, repair and guarantee your satisfaction.

To ensure prompt and efficient service, direct your requests to the appropriate department below:

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Direct your inquiries to the Customer Service department for issues pertaining to returned merchandise, back orders, defective merchandise, company policy, and general game information.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Hardware and software compatibility questions that are specific to Sierra/Dynamix games, sound cards, modems, etc. (including computer free-memory problems, but see page 77 first).

ORDERS

Order games or hardware directly from Sierra On-Line, redeem coupons or use special discounts.

PATCH DISKS

If you have a specific software problem with any Sierra game, send in a detailed description of the problem or the defective disk and Sierra may be able to send you a patch (repair) disk.

HINTS

Game hints are available by mail. Please specify the name of the game and what version it is. Describe where you're at in the game, and what situation you're hung up on. If you want an immediate response, you can call our 24 hour Hint Line at:

900-370-5583

or in California, call 900-370-5113

for complete details refer to page 79 of this issue.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

SIERRA
Customer Support
P.O. Box 600
Coarsegold, CA
93614-0600

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

SIERRA
Technical Support
P.O. Box 800
Coarsegold, CA
93614-0800

HINTS

SIERRA
Hint Dept.
P.O. Box 200
Coarsegold, CA
93614-0200

PATCH DISKS

SIERRA
Dept. 10
P.O. Box 485
Coarsegold, CA
93614-0600

ORDERS

SIERRA
Sales Dept.
P.O. Box 978
Coarsegold, CA
93614-9899



TECHNICAL SUPPORT



by Vince Geraci

Now you can update your CGA or EGA system for a fraction of the cost a new computer would cost you.

Personal computer technology changes from month to month. My first computer was an Atari ST and I loved it. But then all the software around me was changing. I was afraid that if I bought a new IBM compatible 286 or 386, it might be obsolete by the year's end.

I held out for as long as I could. As each month went by new and better software and games were being released. But I couldn't run them on my computer. Finally I couldn't stand it any longer and I went out and bought a 386 SX. I was relieved, but still a little more than concerned that my investment would be obsolete in a few months.

I shouldn't have worried. There are ingenious ways to upgrade a home computer station without purchasing an entirely new machine.

GET WITH THE PROGRAM

Software requirements on work programs often support many types of systems. But if you're like me, you want to use your computer for more than just work.

Computer entertainment software is progressing so fast it's hard to keep up. For example, Sierra On-Line, the manufacturer of PC games, will soon be manufacturing only VGA games. And Sierra isn't the only computer entertainment manufacturer abandoning CGA and EGA. Plus, multimedia CD Rom is just around the corner. What's a personal computer owner to do?

ATTENTION CGA AND EGA COMPUTER OWNERS BECOME A FRUGAL VGA GOURMET

Here's all you have to do. First, decide how you want to update your computer. Do you want VGA or Super VGA? Now don't throw out that CPU. It's not its fault you bought it before

you around \$100. The monitor will cost you in the vicinity of \$300. A Super VGA package will cost you nearly \$700.

Now you've spend only \$400 and you get all the great quality of VGA without buying a whole new computer that might cost you \$1200 or more (though there are lots of good reasons to upgrade to a 386SX).

tracks game manufacturers are building into their games. For example, Sierra On-Line's Police Quest 3 soundtrack was composed by Jan Hammer, known for his soundtracks for the Miami Vice TV show.

In the last issue of InterAction Magazine, Sierra On-Line offered a fantastic deal on Thunder Board sound cards. Think about adding a sound card to your computer system. Better yet, take this test. Watch a movie on your TV with the volume off. Now imagine what you're missing by not having a sound card in your computer.

THE BEST IS YET TO COME

You're finally set up with VGA and great sounding computer entertainment. Well, hold on, I'm not through yet.

Yep, as you expected there's more. The next bridge to cross (financial and technological) is the step up to Multimedia CD ROM (which requires a 386SX). When you're ready to upgrade your computer to take you into the 21st century, or if you have children who are high school age, CD ROM is your most logical choice.

I have it set up here at work and I'm pinching pennies to upgrade my home computer because believe me, I have never seen such megapower in a PC.

You'll find more information on Multimedia CD ROM technology through-out this magazine. But if you have any questions you'd like to see answered in this column in the future, write to:

TECH TIPS DEPT. CS
INTERACTION MAGAZINE
P.O. BOX 800
OAKHURST, CA 93644-9899

The Easy Way To VGA



EGA looked good, but not all color shades could be accurately reproduced.



You can see the BIG difference VGA makes. Colors are richer and graphics are cleaner and crisper.

WAIT A MINUTE DON'T CLOSE THAT COMPUTER

While you're installing your VGA card, see if you have an empty slot for a sound card. It's impossible to tell you what a difference a Sound Card can make in your computer entertainment experience. I wish I could supply a cassette tape with this article so you could hear the theater-quality sound-

VGA. But your monitor, well, that's another story. Find a good computer parts clearing house and get what you can for it. Or hang on to it; it might be part of your kid's first computer.

Now you're going to have to buy a standard VGA board. Look around. Check the classifieds and computer store discount houses. If you have a modem check out the bulletin board services. A VGA board for your computer should cost

If you get an out of memory message, read this article!

by Vince Geraci

Computers are great work horses but when it comes to gaming, they often run out of memory. We'd like to be able to play as hard as we work but we're often forced to play low-end games because our terminals just can't muster the memory to run the latest titles. We miss out on the best in graphics, sound and adventure.

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY MAKES YOUR COMPUTER A DULL TOY

Here's the dilemma:

Today's computer entertainment games and software are designed to make full use of your computer and give you top-quality entertainment. But to do this, the software requires a lot of disk space and memory. Companies like Sierra On-Line are making each game 'byte-efficient' without losing one bit of entertainment quality.

GIVE YOUR COMPUTER THE BOOT SO YOU GET GAMING

Overload, confusion, non-performance: If you're like me, you've had days at work when you've been asked to do a dozen different projects by a dozen different people. Your head is swimming with data and it seems impossible to get anything done. What do you do?

First, you have to stop and re-examine your goals and then place them in priority one by one. Then, you take each project and work on it independently, and finally you get everything done efficiently and quickly.

Computers work in much the same way. They're very logical and

programs BOOT (start up) your computer and all of its program applications.

The CONFIG.SYS file tells your computer to load various applications into its resident

You need ----- more bytes of free memory to run this game. If you have any resident software loaded please remove it and try again. C>

THESE BOOTS ARE MADE FOR GAMING

Now you can create a BOOT DISK that will allow you to utilize your computer's full memory capability without changing the configuration of your hard drive. Here's what happens: When you turn on your computer, it reads the information on your A: drive instead of your C: drive.

Now your computer's free memory is completely available for game playing. When you want to work, you remove the boot DISK from the A: drive and start up your computer again.

If you will be using a mouse to play your game, you must copy your mouse driver onto your Drive A: Memory Boot Disk or you can call Sierra On-Line's Technical Support at (209) 683-8989 for assistance.

That's all there is to it. Don't forget you'll have to restart your computer with the Memory Boot Disk in your A: drive.

Your computer will now reboot with

A: as the default drive. Type C:[Enter] to change back to your hard drive.

Now just follow the instructions in the game manual and get gaming. ⚡

HERE'S HOW TO BOOST YOUR COMPUTER'S FREE MEMORY

- ◆ Insert a blank disk into Drive A:
- ◆ Type C: [ENTER]
- ◆ Type Format A:/S [This will format your A: drive disk as a system disk] [ENTER]
- ◆ Type A: [ENTER]
- ◆ Type COPY CON CONFIG.SYS [ENTER]
- ◆ Type FILES=20 [ENTER]
- ◆ Press the F6 key, then press [Enter]
- ◆ You should see the message: 1 FILE(S) COPIED

If you are using DOS version 4.00 or version 4.01, continue with the following steps:

- ◆ Create an AUTOEXEC.BAT file on your A: Drive disk.
- ◆ Type COPY CON AUTOEXEC.BAT [Enter]
- ◆ Type SET COMSPEC=C:\COMMAND.COM [Enter]
- ◆ Press the F6 key, then press [Enter]
- ◆ Restart your computer with this disk in drive A

If your A: drive takes a 3.5" disk the same instructions apply.

memory.

This is what gives you a problem playing games on your computer.

When you switch over from your work to play a game your computer's memory is at its limit and does not have the free memory space to run the games' program. But there's a way you can easily fix this.

take each command a step at a time. That's why when you turn on your computer a series of commands are given to it automatically from what's called your AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files. These

MS-DOS MEMORY LOSS ELIMINATOR



NINTENDO & SEGA 16-BIT WITH CD

Any discussion of Nintendo and Sega in the multimedia market is pretty much speculative at this point. Both of these Japanese giants have made public comments about coming consoles or add-ons to current equipment, but in reality no one exactly knows what the true potential of these manufacturers will be in the market.

The argument could be made that those most interested in multimedia will want to do productive things with their machines, and therefore the game console offerings will have limited potential in the U.S. But Sega and Nintendo are marketing machines and have sold umpteen-million game consoles.

The first iteration of a 16-bit Nintendo multimedia machine has not yet been released, but it was shown for the first time at the Summer '91 Consumer Electronics Show. Final pricing wasn't quoted, and the software that would take advantage of the machine isn't complete, but a few ready points on the Nintendo with CD are very illuminating.

The Nintendo is a game machine and not a

"...the lack of the mass storage and keyboard could hinder the development of productivity software and some educational applications."

computer. No keyboard, no mass storage device is included. Whether you consider that to be a pro or con is a personal choice, but the lack of the mass storage and keyboard could hinder the development of productivity software and some educational applications.

Also, there seems to be some controversy brewing about exactly who will be making the CD ROM drive for the Nintendo System. At the Summer CES show, Philips and Sony both claimed to have been given the project by Nintendo. Whether this was inspired negotiating by Nintendo (roping two major electronics makers to develop the hardware) or a case of


Nintendo's left hand not knowing what the right hand was doing is still unclear, but what is clear is that there will be two incompatible hardware standards for the Nintendo CD ROM unit. This alone could cause the Nintendo multimedia entry major problems. Add on the fact that most of the other multimedia platforms will beat Nintendo to the stores and Nintendo's success possibilities begin to dim.

The folks at Sega have also been talking long and hard about their upcoming 16-bit powerhouse with CD-ROM. It's been shown in private conference rooms at industry trade shows, and trade magazines

Making Sense of **MULTIMEDIA HARDWARE**

Where does this information leave us? To this writer, the course is clear. If you have a Macintosh, keep it and take a good look at what the addition of a CD-ROM drive could do to your computing productivity. If you own MS-DOS, an investment in MPC will provide both MPC compatibility with your bets covered if the defacto standard only becomes MS-DOS. Amiga owners are invited to look closely at CDTV, but are probably better off with their current machines. Those without one of the above might want to develop a "wait and see" attitude.

Multimedia is, at this point, an industry buzzword and no one knows where it will lead. Maintaining and enhancing the capabilities of your current computer is probably the only safe bet, as there is little doubt that personal computers will still have a place even if the CDTVs, CDI's or next generation of Nintendo's take off. Investment into new and unknown hardware is a gamble right now, and those that want to take the plunge should proceed with both eyes open and an understanding that hardware purchased might end up badly spent.

For more information on emerging multimedia software, you might want to check out the article on pages 56-58 and in the President's Corner in this magazine. 

GAME HINTS



Hey! Don't be Frustrated!

Has Quest for Glory II become too much to handle? Can't stay alive in King's Quest V? Does Space Quest IV have your brain in orbit? Are you lost in the land of Larry 5? Perhaps Police Quest 3 keeps giving you the right to remain silent—permanantly?

Don't panic. The following hints (reprinted from the Sierra and Dynamix Hint Books -see order form) should get you out of a few sticky situations.

The first answer below the game question will usually be a broad hint. The further down you go, the more specific the hints will be. Will you challenge your brain, or blast through the puzzle?

THAT'S UP TO YOU!

Warning! Hints Approaching! (If you do not want to know, DON'T LOOK!)



I'm in the computer facilities on the third floor, but the head technician just rambles about technical stuff. How do I get him to help me?

- Boy, bureaucracy has sure hit the Lytton Police Department.
- He needs a computer i.d. request form before he can help you.
- You'll find this form in your basket on your desk.

I've arrived at Aspen Falls Recreational Area. I see some people having a picnic. Now what?

- Talk to these people.

24 Hour Hint Line
900-370-5583
or in California only
900-370-5113
\$.75 1st minute
\$.50 each add'l minute

Long distance charges are included in the fee. Callers under the age of 18 must get their parent's permission before calling the hint line. ABSOLUTELY NO HINTS WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH OUR CUSTOMER SUPPORT LINES. At this time, the automated hint system is only available within the United States. All contents are copyrighted by Sierra On-Line and may not be reproduced in any form without express written permission.

POLICE QUEST III

- After talking to the concerned female citizen with the child in her arms, go one screen to the right to the river.
- Here you'll find a man who isn't

altogether sane! This is the disturbance you were called out for.

I've pulled over on the freeway and keep getting run over just trying to step out of the car! So how do I get out without being flattened?

- Try clicking the walk cursor on the passenger side of the suspect's car. This way Sonny won't walk out into traffic and get run over. Next, click the talk cursor on the driver's side of the car. Sonny will walk around the front of the car and look into traffic before approaching the suspect.

I see a black car speeding that's registered to the department. Should I pull him over?

- No.
- This is one of Lytton's finest, working undercover. You'll blow his operation if you pull him over.

I'm visiting Marie in the hospital. Is there anything else I can do for her?

- Sure. How about giving her a gift or two?
- You might buy a flower from the florist in the hospital.
- Buy a rose and give it to Marie.
- Remember the music box from the top shelf of your bedroom closet? Give her the music box.
- After giving Marie the rose and the music box, kiss her. That's all you can do for her today.

GAME HINTS

KING'S QUEST V

In town, am I supposed to help the man fix his wagon? Currently he refuses any help.

- No, he doesn't need your help.
- He's got it under control. Thanks anyway.
- He might leave something



behind when he goes. Look carefully around the area when he's gone.

- The man leaves behind a silver coin. You'll notice it on the street near the broken wagon.

The weeping willow tree needs her heart back. Where can I find it?

- In the dark forest.
- You need to conquer the witch in the dark forest first.
- It's in a tree in the dark forest behind a locked door. But you can't get in until you've conquered the evil witch.

Is there anything I can get from the gypsies besides a magic amulet?

- Yes. Go back there again.
- Yes. When they leave, behind a tambourine.

Go back and get it.

I'm dying of cold in the mountains! What can I do about this?

- You need to find something to keep you warm.
- You need to find a piece of clothing that will keep you warm.
- Look in the tailorshop. Perhaps there's a warm piece of clothing there.
- There is a cloak in the tailorshop. That would keep you warm in the mountains.
- Give the golden needle to the the tailor in exchange for the cloak.

Then wear the cloak by clicking the "cloak" cursor on Graham.

I crashed my boat on Mordack's island! Am I stuck here now? Is there anything I need to do before following the trail upwards?

- Yes, I'm afraid you are! And yes, there's something you need to get here.
- Yes, you are. You'll just have to brave it to the very end now! Also, don't forget to get the old dead fish at the bottom of the stone stairs before you leave.

LARRY 5

terminal walls. Somewhere there's an ad for a limousine rental firm.

Remember its phone number.

• Now all you have to do is find some change and a working telephone.

- An access code that will admit you to another area of K-Rap.
- Unlock the desk, open the drawer, and look inside.
- First you'll find a blue stickum with a number on it. Write it down!
- Then examine the desk further.
- This time you'll find a filing folder filled with incriminating evidence!

When I'm at my computer, it tells me it's not charged. How do I go about charging that?

- Get a new camcorder on credit! Then it'll be charged!
- Just kidding.
- Find the battery recharger.
- Look in a drawer in the Tape Room.
- There are three drawers visible under your workbench. Click the hand cursor on the drawer on the left.

How do I tell my chauffeur where I am going?

- If you're going to the airport,

you don't need to. The driver knows you're going to the airport.

- Your object is to track down these girls at their familiar locations, right? How would you know how to find them?
- Do you have anything that refers to them?
- Look in their resumes!

I've landed in a new city, but I'd like to see the important part of the airport!

- You might phone for a limousine.
- ...If you've found a telephone number.
- Read all the advertisements at the top of the airport

Where is my car rental key? I remember that I lost it and need it!

- She can usually be found skating somewhere on the Boardwalk.
- Walk far enough down the boardwalk and you'll come to Ivana's Skates, Etc. Head on in.
- You'll want to rent a pair of roller skates, which will cost you about 250 Tramp Bucks

Where is the key to the limo? I lost it and need it!



QUEST FOR GLORY II

What to Do and See at the Plaza of the Fighter Last

- This is where the entrance to the Weapon Shop is found.
- Both Merchants will sell you something you need at some point in the game.

To Pass the Water Challenge:

- Try the most logical spell for



dealing with ice. Then hit it with something harder, but you have to pick the target where it will do some good.

- Once you've created an opening, there are a couple of ways to widen it.

The Dervish in the Oasis

- The Oasis is a place to get a drink and refill your water bags. You can also sleep here, but don't stay away from the city too long.
- The Dervish is five screens south from the Overlook of the city of Shapier and three screens to the east (make a left turn since your perspective is turned around on the fourth screen).
- Visit the Dervish on day 12. He has a puzzle

for you to solve. Ask for details about what he says.

- The puzzle is five screens west of the Overlook of the city of Shapier and three screens south, but only after day 12.

The Griffin

- The Griffin nests along the cliffs west of town. It is always best to let sleeping Griffins lie.
- The Fighter needs to do some careful searching to uncover a feather.

- The Thief needs to do a fancy rope trick to gain a feather.
- The Magic User needs to use a spell that will let him get to the nest to find a feather.

The Treasure Room

- For a good way not to win the game, save first and check out the various treasures about the room for interesting ways to die. Otherwise, just pass on through.

SPACE QUEST IV

ought to get some new clothes?

- From the top of the escalator, go West on the walkway. Stop at the Big and Tall Alien store and talk to the clerk. He's got just what you need.

- First, get out of the arcade without getting shot.
- When the S.P. arrive, you should be standing in the right rear of the room. Move the cursor to the front (bottom right side of screen) and click the WALK cursor again.

I've found a skimmer parked on the street. Can I use it?

- I don't think it'll run, if that's what you mean. There might be something in it though—try searching it. Click the HAND cursor on the skimmer.
- Maybe there's something in the glove box. Click the HAND cursor on the glove box to open it.
- Hmm...there's something in there. I wonder what it is? Click the EYE cursor on the object to find out.
- Gosh, it's a PocketPalm! Click the HAND cursor on the laptop to take it.

I've fallen into a giant bird's nest. How do I get out before I'm lunch?

- There's a hole in the bottom right side of the nest. Click the WALK cursor on the hole to escape.
- By the way, did you search the Sequel Police officer's body? Click the HAND cursor on the body.

The Latex Babes have gone shopping, and I'm wandering around the mall. It's a cool enough place, but I'm not feeling very heroic. Is there something I should be doing?

- Well, you don't look very heroic in your bare feet and cutoffs—don't you think you

Help! The Sequel Police have tracked me down at the arcade—can I lose them?

- Your future was bound to catch up with you, Rog. You're going to have to outsmart them again. This is going to take some clever maneuvers—think you're up to it?

I plugged in my PocketPal™ and Sludge Vohaul showed up. Did I do something wrong?

- No. Just pay attention to what he says, and continue on your way.
- He's got your son, Roger. You're going to have to rescue him.



RUMOR MILL

by Johnnie Magpie



IT'S B-A-A-A-CK...

InterAction Magazine is back for a second issue! The sudden name change for the last issue obviously took lots of people by surprise. Many of you didn't quite understand that *InterAction* was actually your old favorite *Sierra NewsMagazine* with a facelift.

To illustrate this point, a story in the hallways says that Sierra President Ken Williams recently got a call from one of the members of the Sierra Board of Directors. This board member wanted to congratulate Ken on his fine Public Relations staff, as it sure looked like they had managed to talk this *InterAction* magazine staff into focusing most of their editorial on his company. The actual name of this board member is being withheld, as he makes decisions on Sierra employee salaries, including mine...

KQVI UNDERWAY

Top of the news for this issue is that this is going to be a busy year for Roberta Williams. Her *King's Quest VI* design is now in full production, yet the second Laura Bow mystery is still months away from completion. Roberta has juggled lots of projects before, but two major new adventure games in production is something of a strain on anyone. Word in the halls is that rather than directing these projects herself,

she has elevated her role to executive producer and enlisted talented game designers to direct the projects. Roberta insists that this not only helps her avoid burnout, but adds new creativity and ideas to her top selling games.

ACES OVER OREGON

Scuttlebutt from Dynamix is that *Aces of the Pacific* should be shipping by the time you read this and work is already well underway on *Aces over Europe*. Dynamix is also already close to completion on no less than three add-on disk products for their flight simulators, including a *Red Baron* Mission Builder. If this wasn't enough activity, *Red Baron* versions for Amiga and Color Macintosh are now on the streets, and the multiplayer version of *Red Baron* for *The Sierra Network* should be up any day now. Word is that up to four players can play as a team or opponents, and that it's an addicting little addition to the gaming service.

While Damon Slye and his simulator development team have the whole Dynamix organization working overtime to get these projects out, Dynamix President Jeff Tunnell has quietly resigned his position with the company. Jeff is setting up his own independent company to produce products exclusively for Dynamix. No word on what this will do to production of the sequel to Jeff's *Adventures of Willy Beamish*.

DYNAMIX DOES SQV

It has been confirmed that development of *Space Quest V* is being done at Dynamix under the direction of now Single Guy from Andromeda, Mark Crowe. Former Guy from Andromeda Scott Murphy reportedly is looking to new horizons and

will not be working on the Vth installment. Seems that *Space Quest* is all Scott's been thinking about for half a decade now, and he feels he's been "lost in space" too long.

HITTING NEW LOWS WITH AL LOWE

Of course no discussion of busy guys would be complete without a word on the prolific Al Lowe. After completing production of *Leisure Suit Larry 5*, the new improved version of *Leisure Suit Larry 1*, and the *Laffer Utilities* (including a special Windows version) all in 1991, Al Lowe has decided to take a break from Larry for a while. Word is he's starting work on a comedy western adventure a la *Blazing Saddles*, and that the *Palamino Ranch* brochure found in the new *Leisure Suit Larry 1* package actually has something to do with the game. Upgrade your soundcard now to catch the full effect of Al's campfire scenes!

TSN HAS BIG PLANS AND BIG CROWDS

From *The Sierra Network* building, word is that the development group responsible for creating the *Sierraland Cyberspace Theme Park* is working overtime to get the park up and running in mid-1992. Major attractions of the park, including *Mini-Golf*, multiplayer *Stellar 7*, and the before mentioned *Red Baron* should already be available when you read this, and the *Paintball* game is said to be progressing nicely as well.

The Sierra Network's most pressing issue recently has seemed to be crowd control. The TSN team was overwhelmed by the thousands of new members that signed on with the *TSN Sign-Up Kits* they got as Christmas presents,

and the flow of members jumping from one "host" system to another to participate in group activities created a few near-riot situations. TSN even had to stop issuing new memberships for about 30 days to relieve overload. The problem should be all cleared up by the time you read this magazine.

OUT-OF-DATE UPDATE

Last issue, my article included info about the lack of a future for EGA at Sierra and around the computer industry. As expected, this piece of editorial left a bad taste in the mouths of a lot of people. (Specifically, it left a bad taste in the mouths of owners of EGA and older Tandy computers). Although most in Sierra management were surprised that there was only a minor barrage of protests from users, it was obvious that there were some very unhappy campers amongst the *InterAction* Magazine readership, and this subject was revisited by the big guys in a big way.

It was the numerous meetings that Sierra had with top computer and software retailers at the recent January CES that finally put the lid on the EGA coffin. Retailer after retailer reported that most EGA offerings for Christmas hadn't sold well, and almost all announced that EGA wouldn't be part of their plans for the year ahead. Major surprise though - at least one major retailer with hundreds of stores across the country stated that 5.25" disk format products also weren't moving, and would be dropped from their shelves as well! This definitely signals a trend!

Go out and get that VGA system as soon as you can afford it, and a 3.5" disk drive if needed. I guarantee that you won't be sorry you did!

See you next time!





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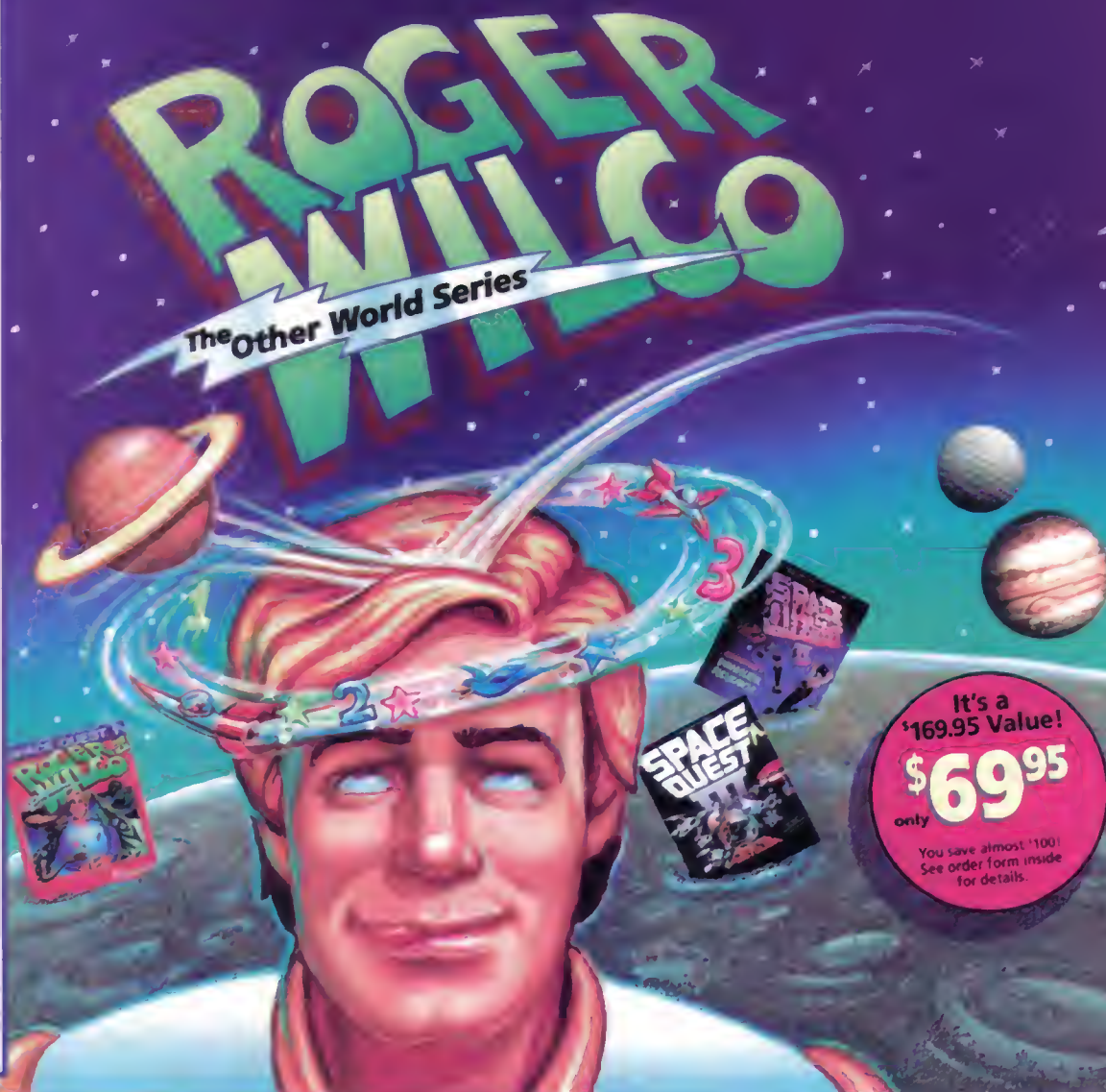
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